POEMS OF WAR AND BATTLE

SELECTED BY

V. H. COLLINS

EDITOR OF 'POEMS OF ACTION'

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THE BALLAD OF AGINCOURT

Fair stood the wind for France,
When we our sails advance,
Nor now to prove our chance
Longer will tarry;
But putting to the main,
At Caux, the mouth of Seine,
With all his martial train,
Landed King Harry.

And taking many a fort,
Furnished in warlike sort,
Marcheth tow'rds Agincourt
In happy hour;
Skirmishing day by day
With those that stopped his way,
Where the French general lay
With all his power.

Which, in his height of pride,
King Henry to deride,
His ransom to provide
To the king sending;
Which he neglects the while,
As from a nation vile,
Yet with an angry smile
Their fall portending.

And turning to his men,
Quoth our brave Henry then,
Though they to one be ten,
Be not amazèd.
Yet have we well begun,
Battles so bravely won
Have ever to the sun
By fame been raisèd.

And, for myself (quoth he),
This my full rest shall be,
England ne'er mourn for me,
Nor more esteem me.
Victor I will remain,
Or on this earth lie slain,
Never shall she sustain
Loss to redeem me.

Poitiers and Cressy tell,
When most their pride did swell,
Under our swords they fell,
No less our skill is
Than when our grandsire great,
Claiming the regal seat,
By many a warlike feat
Lopped the French lilies.

The Duke of York so dread
The eager vaward led;
With the main, Henry sped,
Amongst his henchmen.
Excester had the rear,
A braver man not there;
O Lord, how hot they were
On the false Frenchmen!

They now to fight are gone,
Armour on armour shone,
Drum now to drum did groan,
To hear was wonder;
That with the cries they make,
The very earth did shake,
Trumpet to trumpet spake,
Thunder to thunder.

Well it thine age became,
O noble Erpingham,
Which didst the signal aim
To our hid forces;
When from a meadow by,
Like a storm suddenly
The English archery
Stuck the French horses,

With Spanish yew so strong,
Arrows a cloth-yard long,
That like to serpents stung,
Piercing the weather;
None from his fellow starts,
But playing manly parts,
And like true English hearts
Stuck close together.

When down their bows they threw,
And forth their bilbos drew,
And on the French they flew,
Not one was tardy;
Arms were from shoulders sent,
Scalps to the teeth were rent,
Down the French peasants went,
Our men were hardy.

This while our noble king
His broad sword brandishing,
Down the French host did ding,
As to o'erwhelm it;
And many a deep wound lent,
His arms with blood besprent,
And many a cruel dent
Bruisèd his helmet.

Gloucester, that Duke so good,
Next of the royal blood,
For famous England stood,
With his brave brother;
Clarence, in steel so bright,
Though but a maiden knight,
Yet in that famous fight,
Scarce such another.

Warwick in blood did wade,
Oxford the foe invade,
And cruel slaughter made,
Still as they ran up;
Suffolk his axe did ply,
Beaumont and Willoughby
Bare them right doughtily,
Ferrers and Fanhope.

Upon Saint Crispin's day
Fought was this noble fray,
Which fame did not delay
To England to carry;
Oh, when shall Englishmen
With such acts fill a pen,
Or England breed again
Such a King Harry?

MICHAEL DRAYTON.

HARFLEUR

King Henry. Once more unto the breach, dear
friends, once more;
Or close the wall up with our English dead!
In peace there 's nothing so becomes a man
As modest stillness and humility;
But when the blast of war blows in our ears,
Then imitate the action of the tiger;
Stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood,
Disguise fair nature with hard-favour'd rage;
Then lend the eye a terrible aspect;
Let it pry through the portage of the head
Like the brass cannon; let the brow o'erwhelm it
As fearfully as doth a gallèd rock
O'erhang and jutty his confounded base,
Swill'd with the wild and wasteful ocean.
Now set the teeth and stretch the nostril wide,
Hold hard the breath, and bend up every spirit
To his full height! On, on, you noblest English!
Whose blood is fet from fathers of war-proof;
Fathers that, like so many Alexanders,
Have in these parts from morn till even fought,
And sheath'd their swords for lack of argument.
Dishonour not your mothers; now attest
That those whom you call'd fathers did beget you.
Be copy now to men of grosser blood,
And teach them how to war. And you, good yeomen,
Whose limbs were made in England, show us here
The mettle of your pasture; let us swear
That you are worth your breeding; which I doubt not;
For there is none of you so mean and base
That hath not noble lustre in your eyes.
I see you stand like greyhounds in the slips,
Straining upon the start. The game 's afoot:
Follow your spirit; and, upon this charge
Cry 'God for Harry! England and Saint George!

SHAKESPEARE.

AGINCOURT

Henry (*to his soldiers before the battle*). This day
is call'd the feast of Crispian :
He that outlives this day, and comes safe home,
Will stand a tip-toe when this day is nam'd,
And rouse him at the name of Crispian.
He that shall live this day, and see old age,
Will yearly on the vigil feast his neighbours,
And say, 'To-morrow is Saint Crispian : '
Then will he strip his sleeve and show his scars,
And say, 'These wounds I had on Crispin's day.'
Old men forget ; yet all shall be forgot,
But he'll remember with advantages
What feats he did that day. Then shall our names,
Familiar in his mouth as household words,
Harry the king, Bedford and Exeter,
Warwick and Talbot, Salisbury and Gloucester,
Be in their flowing cups freshly remember'd.
This story shall the good man teach his son ;
And Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by,
From this day to the ending of the world,
But we in it shall be remembered ;
We few, we happy few, we band of brothers ;
For he to-day that sheds his blood with me
Shall be my brother ; be he ne'er so vile
This day shall gentle his condition :
And gentlemen in England, now a-bed,
Shall think themselves accurs'd they were not here,
And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks
That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day.

Shakespeare.

THE BATTLE OF OTTERBOURNE

It fell about the Lammas tide,
When the muir-men win their hay,
The doughty earl of Douglas rode
Into England, to catch a prey.

He chose the Gordons and the Graemes,
With them the Lindesays, light and gay;
But the Jardines wald not with him ride,
And they rue it to this day.

And he has burn'd the dales of Tyne,
And part of Bambrough shire;
And three good towers on Roxburgh fells,
He left them all on fire.

And he march'd up to Newcastle,
And rode it round about;
'O wha 's the lord of this castle,
Or wha 's the lady o't?'

But up spake proud Lord Percy, then,
And O but he spake hie!
'I am the lord of this castle,
My wife 's the lady gay.'

'If thou 'rt the lord of this castle,
Sae weel it pleases me!
For, ere I cross the border fells,
The tane of us shall die.'

He took a long spear in his hand,
Shod with the metal free,
And for to meet the Douglas there
He rode right furiouslie.

But O how pale his lady look'd
  Frae aff the castle wa',
When down before the Scottish spear,
  She saw proud Percy fa'.

'Had we twa been upon the green,
  And never an eye to see,
I wad hae had you, flesh and fell;
  But your sword sall gae wi' me.'

'But gae ye up to Otterbourne,
  And wait there dayis three;
And, if I come not ere three dayis end,
  A fause knight ca' ye me.'

'The Otterbourne 's a bonnie burn;
  'Tis pleasant there to be;
But there is nought at Otterbourne
  To feed my men and me.

'The deer rins wild on hill and dale,
  The birds fly wild from tree to tree;
But there is neither bread nor kale
  To feed my men and me.

'Yet I will stay at Otterbourne,
  Where you shall welcome be;
And, if you come not at three dayis end,
  A fause lord I'll ca' thee.'

'Thither will I come,' proud Percy said,
  'By the might of Our Ladye!'—
'There will I bide thee,' said the Douglas,
  'My trowth I plight to thee.'

They lighted high on Otterbourne,
  Upon the bent sae brown;
They lighted high on Otterbourne,
  And threw their pallions down.

And he that had a bonnie boy,
  Sent out his horse to grass;
And he that had not a bonnie boy,
  His ain servant he was.

But up then spake a little page,
  Before the peep of dawn—
'O waken ye, waken ye, my good lord,
  For Percy's hard at hand.'

'Ye lie, ye lie, ye liar loud!
  Sae loud I hear ye lie:
For Percy had not men yestreen,
  To dight my men and me.

'But I hae dream'd a dreary dream,
  Beyond the Isle of Skye;
I saw a dead man win a fight,
  And I think that man was I.'

He belted on his good braid sword,
  And to the field he ran;
But he forgot the helmet good,
  That should have kept his brain.

When Percy wi' the Douglas met,
  I wat he was fu' fain!
They swakked their swords, till sair they swat,
  And the blood ran down like rain.

But Percy with his good braid sword,
  That could so sharply wound,
Has wounded Douglas on the brow,
  Till he fell to the ground.

Then he call'd on his little foot-page,
  And said—'Run speedilie,
And fetch my ain dear sister's son,
  Sir Hugh Montgomery.'

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'My nephew good,' the Douglas said,
'What recks the death of ane!
Last night I dream'd a dreary dream,
And I ken the day 's thy ain.

'My wound is deep; I fain would sleep;
Take thou the vanguard of the three,
And hide me by the braken bush,
That grows on yonder lilye lee.

'O bury me by the braken bush,
Beneath the blooming briar,
Let never living mortal ken
That e'er a kindly Scot lies here.'

He lifted up that noble lord,
Wi' the saut tear in his e'e;
He hid him in the braken bush,
That his merrie men might not see.

The moon was clear, the day drew near,
The spears in flinders flew,
But many a gallant Englishman
Ere day the Scotsmen slew.

The Gordons good in English blood
They steep'd their hose and shoon;
The Lindsays flew like fire about,
Till all the fray was done.

The Percy and Montgomery met,
That either of other were fain;
That swappèd swords, and they twa swat,
And ayc the blude ran down between.

'Yield thee, O yield thee, Percy!' he said,
'Or else I vow I'll lay thee low!'
'Whom to shall I yield,' said Earl Percy,
'Now that I see it must be so?'

'Thou shall not yield to lord nor loun,
  Nor yet shalt thou yield to me;
But yield thee to the braken bush,
  That grows upon yon lilye lee!'

'I will not yield to a braken bush,
  Nor yet will I yield to a briar;
But I would yield to Earl Douglas,
  Or Sir Hugh the Montgomery, if he were here.'

As soon as he knew it was Montgomery,
  He stuck his sword's point in the gronde;
And the Montgomery was a courteous knight,
  And quickly took him by the honde.

This deed was done at Otterbourne,
  About the breaking of the day;
Earl Douglas was buried at the braken bush,
  And the Percy led captive away.

UNKNOWN.

AGINCOURT; OR, THE ENGLISH BOWMAN'S GLORY

AGINCOURT, Agincourt!
Know ye not Agincourt?
Where English slew and hurt
  All their French foemen?
With our pikes and bills brown,
How the French were beat down,
  Shot by our bowmen?

Agincourt, Agincourt!
Know ye not Agincourt,
Never to be forgot
  Or known to no men?

Where English cloth-yard arrows
Killed the French like tame sparrows,
Slain by our bowmen ?

Agincourt, Agincourt !
Know ye not Agincourt,
Where we won field and fort ?
French fled like women
By land and eke by water ;
Never was seen such slaughter,
Made by our bowmen.

Agincourt, Agincourt !
Know ye not Agincourt ?
English of every sort,
High men and low men,
Fought that day wondrous well, as
All our old stories tell us,
Thanks to our bowmen.

Agincourt, Agincourt !
Know ye not Agincourt ?
Either tale, or report,
Quickly will show men
What can be done by courage,
Men without food or forage,
Still lusty bowmen.

Agincourt, Agincourt !
Know ye not Agincourt ?
Where such a fight was fought,
As, when they grow men,
Our boys shall imitate ;
Nor need we long to wait ;
They'll be good bowmen.

Agincourt, Agincourt !
Know ye not Agincourt ?

Where our fifth Harry taught
Frenchmen to know men:
And, when the day was done,
Thousands there fell to one
Good English bowman!

Agincourt, Agincourt!
Huzza for Agincourt!
When that day is forgot
There will be no men.
It was a day of glory,
And till our heads are hoary
Praise we our bowmen.

Agincourt, Agincourt!
Know ye not Agincourt?
When our best hopes were nought,
Tenfold our foemen.
Harry led his men to battle,
Slew the French like sheep and cattle:
Huzza! our bowmen.

Agincourt, Agincourt!
Know ye not Agincourt?
O, it was noble sport!
Then did we owe men;
Men, who a victory won us
'Gainst any odds among us:
Such were our bowmen.

Agincourt, Agincourt!
Know ye not Agincourt?
Dear was the victory bought
By fifty yeomen.
Ask any English wench,
They were worth all the French,
Rare English bowmen!

UNKNOWN.

MARY AMBREE

When captains courageous, whom death could not daunt,
Did march to the siege of the city of Gaunt,
They mustered their soldiers by two and by three,
And the foremost in battle was Mary Ambree.

When brave Sir John Major was slain in her sight,
Who was her true lover, her joy and delight,
Because he was slain most treacherously
Then vowed to revenge him Mary Ambree.

She clothèd herself from the top to the toe
In buff of the bravest, most seemly to show
A fair shirt of mail then slippèd on she;
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree?

A helmet of proof she straight did provide,
A strong arming sword she girt by her side,
On her hand a goodly fair gauntlet put she;
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree?

Then took she her sword and her target in hand,
Bidding all such, as would, be of her band;
To wait on her person came thousand and three:
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree?

My soldiers, she saith, so valiant and bold,
Now follow your captain whom you do behold;
Still foremost in battle myself will I be:
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree?

Then cried out her soldiers, and loud they did say,
So well thou becomest this gallant array,
Thy heart and thy weapons so well do agree,
There was none ever like Mary Ambree.

She cheerèd her soldiers, that foughten for life,
With ancient and standard, with drum and with fife,
With brave clanging trumpets, that sounded so free;
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree?

Before I will see the worst of you all
To come into danger of death, or of thrall,
This hand and this life I will venture so free:
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree?

She led up her soldiers in battle array,
'Gainst three times their number by break of the day;
Seven hours in skirmish continuèd she:
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree?

She fillèd the skies with the smoke of her shot,
And her enemies' bodies with bullets so hot;
For one of her own men a score killèd she:
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree?

And when her false gunner, to spoil her intent,
Away all her pellets and powder had sent,
Straight with her keen weapon she slashed him in three:
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree?

Being falsely betrayed for lucre of hire,
At length she was forced to make a retire;
Then her soldiers into a strong castle drew she:
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree?

Her foes they beset her on every side,
As thinking close siege she could never abide;
To beat down the walls they all did decree:
But stoutly defied them brave Mary Ambree.

Then took she her sword and her target in hand,
And mounting the walls all undaunted did stand,
There daring their captains to match any three:
O what a brave captain was Mary Ambree!

Now say, English captain, what wouldest thou give
To ransom thyself, which else must not live?
Come yield thyself quickly, or slain thou must be.
Then smilèd sweetly brave Mary Ambree.

Ye captains courageous, of valour so bold,
Whom think you before you now you do behold?
A knight, sir, of England, and captain so free,
Who shortly with us a prisoner must be.

No captain of England; behold in your sight
Two breasts in my bosom, and therefore no knight:
No knight, sirs, of England, nor captain you see,
But a poor simple lass, called Mary Ambree.

But art thou a woman, as thou dost declare,
Whose valour hath proved so undaunted in war?
If England doth yield such brave lasses as thee,
Full well may they conquer, fair Mary Ambree.

The Prince of Great Parma heard of her renown,
Who long had advancèd for England's fair crown;
He wooed her and sued her his mistress to be,
And offered rich presents to Mary Ambree.

But this virtuous maiden despisèd them all,
I'll ne'er sell my honour for purple nor pall:
A maiden of England, sir, never will be
The toy of a monarch, quoth Mary Ambree.

Then to her own country she back did return,
Still holding the foes of fair England in scorn:
Therefore English captains of every degree
Sing forth the brave valours of Mary Ambree.

UNKNOWN.

THE BRAVE LORD WILLOUGHBY

The fifteenth day of July,
with glistering spear and shield,
A famous fight in Flanders
was foughten in the field:
The most courageous officers
was English captains three,
But the bravest man in battle
was brave Lord Willoughby.

The next was Captain Norris,
a valiant man was he:
The other, Captain Turner,
that from field would never flee:
With fifteen hundred fighting men,
alas! there was no more,
They fought with forty thousand then
upon the bloody shore.

'Stand to it, noble pikemen,
and look you round about;
And shoot you right, you bowmen,
and we will keep them out:
You musket and caliver men
do you prove true to me,
I'll be the foremost man in fight,'
says brave Lord Willoughby.

And then the bloody enemy
they fiercely did assail:
And fought it out most valiantly,
not doubting to prevail:
The wounded men on both sides fell,
most piteous for to see,
Yet nothing could the courage quell
of brave Lord Willoughby.

For seven hours to all men's view
this fight endurèd sore,
Until our men so feeble grew
that they could fight no more:
And then upon dead horses
full savourly they eat,
And drank the puddle water,
for no better they could get.

When they had fed so freely,
they kneelèd on the ground,
And praisèd God devoutly,
for the favour they had found;
And bearing up their colours,
the fight they did renew,
And turning toward the Spaniard,
five thousand more they slew.

The sharp steel-pointed arrows,
and bullets thick did fly,
Then did our valiant soldiers
charge on most furiously:
Which made the Spaniards waver,
they thought it best to flee,
They feared the stout behaviour
of brave Lord Willoughby.

Then quoth the Spanish General,
'Come, let us march away,
I fear we shall be spoilèd all,
if that we longer stay:
For yonder comes Lord Willoughby,
with courage fierce and fell,
He will not give one inch of ground,
for all the devils in hell.'

And then the fearful enemy
was quickly put to flight,
Our men pursued courageously,
and rout their forces quite:
And at last they gave a shout,
which echoed through the sky,
'God and Saint George for England!'
the conquerors did cry.

This news was brought to England,
with all the speed might be,
And told unto our gracious Queen,
of this same victory:
'O this is brave Lord Willoughby,
my love hath ever won,
Of all the lords of honour,
'tis he great deeds hath done.'

For soldiers that were maimèd,
and wounded in the fray,
The Queen allowed a pension
of eighteen pence a day:
Beside, all costs and charges
she quit and set them free,
And this she did all for the sake
of brave Lord Willoughby.

Then courage, noble Englishmen,
and never be dismayed,
If that we be but one to ten,
we will not be afraid
To fight the foreign enemies,
and set our country free,
And thus I end this bloody bout
of brave Lord Willoughby.

UNKNOWN.

THE HONOUR OF BRISTOL

Attend you and give ear awhile,
and you shall understand,
Of a battle fought upon the seas,
by a ship of brave command;
The fight it was so famous
that all men's heart doth fill,
And makes them cry, 'To sea
with the Angel Gabriel!'

The lusty ship of Bristol
sailed out adventurously
Against the foes of England,
their strength with them to try;
Well victualled, rigged, and manned,
and good provision still,
Which makes men cry, 'To sea,
with the Angel Gabriel!'

The Captain, famous Netheway,
so was he called by name;
The Master's name John Mines,
a man of noted fame:
The Gunner Thomas Watson,
a man of perfect skill,
With other valiant hearts
in the Angel Gabriel.

They waving up and down the seas,
upon the ocean main;
'It is not long ago,' quoth they,
'since England fought with Spain!

Would we with them might meet,
our minds for to fulfil,
We would play a noble bout
with our Angel Gabriel!'

They had no sooner spoken,
but straight appeared in sight
Three lusty Spanish vessels,
of warlike force and might;
With bloody resolution
they sought our men to spill,
And vowed to make a prize
of our Angel Gabriel.

Then first came up their Admiral,
themselves for to advance,
In her she bore full forty-eight
pieces of ordinance;
The next that then came near us
was their Vice-Admiral,
Which shot most furiously
at our Angel Gabriel.

Our gallant ship had in her
full forty fighting men;
With twenty pieces of ord'nance
we played about them then;
With powder, shot, and bullets,
we did employ them still,
And thus began the fight
with our Angel Gabriel.

Our Captain to our Master said,
'Take courage, Master bold';
The Master to the seamen said,
'Stand fast, my hearts of gold';

The Gunner unto all the rest,
'Brave hearts, be valiant still,
Let us fight in the defence
of our Angel Gabriel!'

Then we gave them a broadside,
which shot their mast asunder,
And tore the bowsprit of their ship,
which made the Spaniards wonder;
And caused them for to cry,
with voices loud and shrill:
'Help, help, or else we sink
by the Angel Gabriel.'

Yet desperately they boarded us,
for all our valiant shot;
Threescore of their best fighting-men
upon our decks were got;
And then at their first entrance
full thirty we did kill;
And thus we cleared the decks
of the Angel Gabriel.

With that, their three ships boarded us
again with might and main,
But still our noble Englishmen
cried out 'A fig for Spain!'
Though seven times they boarded us,
at last we showed our skill,
And made them feel the force
of our Angel Gabriel.

Seven hours this fight continued,
and many brave men lay dead,
With purple gore and Spanish blood
the sea was coloured red;

Five hundred of their men
we there outright did kill;
And many more were maimed
by the Angel Gabriel.

They seeing of these bloody spoils,
the rest made haste away,
For why, they saw it was no boot,
any longer for to stay;
Then they fled into Calès,
and there they must lie still,
For they never more will dare to meet
our Angel Gabriel.

We had within our English ship
but only three men slain;
And five men hurt, the which, I hope,
will soon be well again.
At Bristol we were landed,
and let us praise God still,
That thus hath blest our men,
and our Angel Gabriel.

Now let me not forget to speak
of the gift given by the owner
Of the *Angel Gabriel,*
that many years have known her;
Two hundred pounds in coin and plate,
he gave with free goodwill,
Unto them that bravely fought
in the Angel Gabriel.

UNKNOWN.

THE BRITISH GRENADIERS

Some talk of Alexander, and some of Hercules,
Of Hector and Lysander, and such great names as these;
But of all the world's brave heroes, there 's none that can compare
With a tow row row row row row, for the British Grenadier.

Those heroes of antiquity ne'er saw a cannon-ball,
Or knew the force of powder to slay their foes withal;
But our brave boys do know it, and banish all their fears,
Sing tow row row row row row, for the British Grenadiers.

Whene'er we are commanded to storm the palisades,
Our leaders march with fusees, and we with hand-grenades;
We throw them from the glacis, about the enemies' ears,
Sing tow row row row row row, for the British Grenadiers.

And when the siege is over we to the town repair,
The townsmen cry, hurrah, boys, here comes a Grenadier,
Here come the Grenadiers, my boys, who know no doubts or fears,
Sing tow row row row row row, for the British Grenadiers.

Then let us fill a bumper, and drink a health to those
Who carry caps and pouches, and wear the loupèd clothes ;
May they and their commanders live happy all their years,
With a tow row row row row row, for the British Grenadiers.

UNKNOWN.

TO LUCASTA, ON GOING TO THE WARS

TELL me not, Sweet, I am unkind
That from the nunnery
Of thy chaste breast and quiet mind
To war and arms I fly.

True, a new mistress now I chase,
The first foe in the field ;
And with a stronger faith embrace
A sword, a horse, a shield.

Yet this inconstancy is such
As you too shall adore ;
I could not love thee, Dear, so much,
Loved I not Honour more.

RICHARD LOVELACE.

ODE WRITTEN IN 1746

How sleep the Brave who sink to rest
By all their Country's wishes blest!
When Spring, with dewy fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallowed mould,
She there shall dress a sweeter sod
Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.

By fairy hands their knell is rung,
By forms unseen their dirge is sung:
There Honour comes, a pilgrim grey,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay,
And Freedom shall awhile repair
To dwell, a weeping hermit, there!

WILLIAM COLLINS.

A WAR SONG TO ENGLISHMEN

PREPARE, prepare the iron helm of war,
Bring forth the lots, cast in the spacious orb;
Th' Angel of Fate turns them with mighty hands,
And casts them out upon the darkened earth!
Prepare, prepare.

Prepare your hearts for Death's cold hand! prepare
Your souls for flight, your bodies for the earth;
Prepare your arms for glorious victory!
Prepare your eyes to meet a holy God!
Prepare, prepare.

Whose fatal scroll is that? Methinks 'tis mine!
Why sinks my heart, why faltereth my tongue?
Had I three lives, I'd die in such a cause,
And rise, with ghosts, over the well-fought field.
Prepare, prepare.

The arrows of Almighty God are drawn!
Angels of Death stand in the lowering heavens!
Thousands of souls must seek the realms of light,
And walk together on the clouds of heaven!
Prepare, prepare.

Soldiers, prepare! Our cause is Heaven's cause;
Soldiers, prepare! Be worthy of our cause:
Prepare to meet our fathers in the sky:
Prepare, O troops, that are to fall to-day!
Prepare, prepare.

Alfred shall smile, and make his harp rejoice;
The Norman William, and the learnèd Clerk,
And Lion Heart, and black-browed Edward, with
His loyal queen, shall rise, and welcome us!
Prepare, prepare.

WILLIAM BLAKE.

SCOTS WHA HAE

Robert Bruce's address to his army before the battle of Bannockburn.

SCOTS, wha hae wi' Wallace bled,
Scots, wham Bruce has often led,
Welcome to your gory bed,
Or to victorie!

Now 's the day, and now 's the hour;
See the front o' battle lour!
See approach proud Edward's pow'r—
Chains and slaverie!

Wha will be a traitor-knave?
Wha can fill a coward's grave?
Wha sae base as be a slave?
Let him turn and flee!

Wha for Scotland's king and law
Freedom's sword will strongly draw,
Freeman stand, or freeman fa'?
Let him follow me!

By oppression's woes and pains!
By your sons in servile chains!
We will drain our dearest veins,
But they shall be free!

Lay the proud usurpers low!
Tyrants fall in every foe!
Liberty's in every blow!
Let us do, or die!

ROBERT BURNS.

THE *ARETHUSA*

COME, all ye jolly sailors bold,
Whose hearts are cast in honour's mould,
While English glory I unfold,
Huzza to the *Arethusa*!
She is a frigate tight and brave,
As ever stemmed the dashing wave;
Her men are staunch
To their fav'rite launch,
And when the foe shall meet our fire,
Sooner than strike we'll all expire
On board of the *Arethusa*.

'Twas with the spring fleet she went out
The English Channel to cruise about,
When four French sail, in show so stout,
Bore down on the *Arethusa*.

The famed *Belle Poule* straight ahead did lie,
The *Arethusa* seemed to fly,
Not a sheet, or a tack,
Or a brace, did she slack,
Though the Frenchmen laughed and thought it stuff,
But they knew not the handful of men, how tough,
On board of the *Arethusa.*

On deck five hundred men did dance,
The stoutest they could find in France;
We, with two hundred, did advance
On board of the *Arethusa.*
Our captain hailed the Frenchman, 'Ho!'
The Frenchman then cried out 'Hallo!'
'Bear down, d'ye see,
To our Admiral's lee!'
'No, no,' says the Frenchman, 'that can't be!'
'Then I must lug you along with me!'
Says the saucy *Arethusa.*

The fight was off the Frenchman's land,
We forced them back upon their strand;
For we fought till not a stick would stand
Of the gallant *Arethusa.*
And now we've driven the foe ashore
Never to fight with Britons more,
Let each fill a glass
To his favourite lass!
A health to our captain, and officers true,
And all that belong to the jovial crew,
On board of the *Arethusa!*

PRINCE HOARE.

BEFORE BANNOCKBURN

The Monarch rode along the van,
The foe's approaching force to scan,
His line to marshal and to range,
And ranks to square, and fronts to change.
Alone he rode—from head to heel
Sheathed in his ready arms of steel;
Nor mounted yet on war-horse wight,
But, till more near the shock of fight,
Reining a palfrey low and light.
A diadem of gold was set
Above his bright steel basinet.
Truncheon or leading staff he lacks,
Bearing, instead, a battle-axe.
He ranged his soldiers for the fight,
Accoutred thus, in open sight
Of either host. Three bowshots far,
Paused the deep front of England's war,
And rested on their arms awhile,
To close and rank their warlike file,
And hold high council, if that night
Should view the strife, or dawning light.
O gay, yet fearful to behold,
Flashing with steel and rough with gold,
And bristled o'er with bills and spears,
With plumes and pennons waving fair,
Was that bright battle-front! for there
Rode England's King and peers:
And who, that saw that monarch ride,
His kingdom battled by his side,
Could then his direful doom foretell!
Fair was his seat in knightly selle,
And in his sprightly eye was set
Some spark of the Plantagenet.

Though light and wandering was his glance,
It flash'd at sight of shield and lance.
'Know'st thou,' he said, 'De Argentine,
Yon knight who marshals thus their line?'
'The tokens on his helmet tell
The Bruce, my Liege: I know him well.'
'And shall the audacious traitor brave
The presence where our banners wave?'
'So please my liege,' said Argentine,
'Were he but horsed on steed like mine,
To give him fair and knightly chance,
I would adventure forth my lance.'
'In battle-day', the King replied,
'Nice tourney rules are set aside.
Still must the rebel dare our wrath?
Set on him, sweep him from our path!'
And, at King Edward's signal, soon
Dash'd from the ranks Sir Henry Boune.
Of Hereford's high blood he came,
A race renown'd for knightly fame.
He burn'd before his Monarch's eye
To do some deed of chivalry.
He spurr'd his steed, he couch'd his lance,
And darted on the Bruce at once.
As motionless as rocks, that bide
The wrath of the advancing tide,
The Bruce stood fast. Each breast beat high,
And dazzled was each gazing eye,
The heart had hardly time to think,
The eyelid scarce had time to wink,
While on the King, like flash of flame,
Spurr'd to full speed the war-horse came!
The partridge may the falcon mock
If that slight palfrey stand the shock;
But, swerving from the Knight's career,
Just as they met, Bruce shunn'd the spear.

Onward the baffled warrior bore
His course—but soon his course was o'er!
High in his stirrups stood the King,
And gave his battle-axe the swing.
Right on De Boune, the whiles he pass'd,
Fell that stern dint, the first, the last!
Such strength upon the blow was put,
The helmet crash'd like hazel-nut;
The axe-shaft, with its brazen clasp,
Was shiver'd to the gauntlet grasp.
Springs from the blow the startled horse,
Drops to the plain the lifeless corse;
First of that fatal field, how soon,
How sudden, fell the fierce De Boune!

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

PIBROCH OF DONUIL DHU

PIBROCH of Donuil Dhu,
Pibroch of Donuil,
Wake thy wild voice anew,
Summon Clan-Conuil.
Come away, come away,
Hark to the summons!
Come in your war array,
Gentles and commons.

Come from deep glen, and
From mountain so rocky,
The war-pipe and pennon
Are at Inverlochy.
Come every hill-plaid, and
True heart that wears one,
Come every steel blade, and
Strong hand that bears one.

Leave untended the herd,
The flock without shelter;
Leave the corpse uninterr'd,
The bride at the altar;
Leave the deer, leave the steer,
Leave nets and barges:
Come with your fighting gear,
Broadswords and targes.

Come as the winds come, when
Forests are rended,
Come as the waves come, when
Navies are stranded:
Faster come, faster come,
Faster and faster,
Chief, vassal, page and groom,
Tenant and master.

Fast they come, fast they come;
See how they gather!
Wide waves the eagle plume,
Blended with heather.
Cast your plaids, draw your blades,
Forward, each man, set!
Pibroch of Donuil Dhu,
Knell for the onset!

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

FLODDEN

And why stands Scotland idly now,
Dark Flodden! on thy airy brow,
Since England gains the pass the while,
And struggles through the deep defile?
What checks the fiery soul of James?
Why sits that champion of the dames
  Inactive on his steed,
And sees, between him and his land,
Between him and Tweed's southern strand,
  His host Lord Surrey lead?
What 'vails the vain knight-errant's brand?
O, Douglas, for thy leading wand!
  Fierce Randolph, for thy speed!
O for one hour of Wallace wight,
Or well-skill'd Bruce, to rule the fight,
And cry 'Saint Andrew and our right!'
Another sight had seen that morn,
From Fate's dark book a leaf been torn,
And Flodden had been Bannockbourne!
The precious hour has pass'd in vain,
And England's host has gain'd the plain;
Wheeling their march, and circling still,
Around the base of Flodden hill.
'And see ascending squadrons come
  Between Tweed's river and the hill,
Foot, horse, and cannon: hap what hap,
My basnet to a prentice cap,
  Lord Surrey's o'er the Till!
Yet more! yet more!—how far array'd
They file from out the hawthorn shade,
  And sweep so gallant by!
With all their banners bravely spread,
  And all their armour flashing high,

Saint George might waken from the dead,
To see fair England's standards fly.'—
'But see! look up—on Flodden bent
The Scottish foe has fired his tent.'
And sudden, as he spoke,
From the sharp ridges of the hill,
All downward to the banks of Till,
Was wreath'd in sable smoke.
Volum'd and fast, and rolling far,
The cloud envelop'd Scotland's war,
As down the hill they broke;
Nor martial shout, nor minstrel tone,
Announc'd their march; their tread alone,
At times one warning trumpet blown,
At times a stifled hum,
Told England, from his mountain-throne
King James did rushing come.
Scarce could they hear, or see their foes,
Until at weapon-point they close.
They close, in clouds of smoke and dust,
With sword-sway, and with lance's thrust;
And such a yell was there,
Of sudden and portentous birth,
As if men fought upon the earth,
And fiends in upper air.
At length the freshening western blast
Aside the shroud of battle cast;
And, first, the ridge of mingled spears
Above the brightening cloud appears;
And in the smoke the pennons flew,
As in the storm the white sea-mew.
Then mark'd they, dashing broad and far,
The broken billows of the war,
And plumèd crests of chieftains brave,
Floating like foam upon the wave;
But nought distinct they see:

Wide rag'd the battle on the plain;
Spears shook, and falchions flash'd amain;
Fell England's arrow-flight like rain;
Crests rose, and stoop'd, and rose again,
Wild and disorderly.
Amid the scene of tumult, high
They saw Lord Marmion's falcon fly:
And stainless Tunstall's banner white,
And Edmund Howard's lion bright,
Still bear them bravely in the fight:
Although against them come,
Of gallant Gordons many a one,
And many a stubborn Badenoch-man,
And many a rugged Border clan,
With Huntly, and with Home.
Far on the left, unseen the while,
Stanley broke Lennox and Argyle;
Though there the western mountaineer
Rush'd with bare bosom on the spear,
And flung the feeble targe aside,
And with both hands the broadsword plied.
'Twas vain:—But Fortune, on the right,
With fickle smile, cheer'd Scotland's fight.
Then fell that spotless banner white,
The Howard's lion fell;
Yet still Lord Marmion's falcon flew
With wavering flight, while fiercer grew
Around the battle-yell.
The Border slogan rent the sky!
A Home! a Gordon! was the cry:
Loud were the clanging blows;
Advanc'd, forc'd back, now low, now high,
The pennon sunk and rose;
As bends the bark's mast in the gale,
When rent are rigging, shrouds, and sail,
It waver'd 'mid the foes.

But as they left the dark'ning heath,
More desperate grew the strife of death.
The English shafts in volleys hail'd,
In headlong charge their horse assail'd;
Front, flank, and rear, the squadrons sweep
To break the Scottish circle deep,
That fought around their King.
But yet, though thick the shafts as snow,
Though charging knights like whirlwinds go,
Though bill-men ply the ghastly blow,
Unbroken was the ring;
The stubborn spear-men still made good
Their dark impenetrable wood,
Each stepping where his comrade stood,
The instant that he fell.
No thought was there of dastard flight;
Link'd in the serried phalanx tight,
Groom fought like noble, squire like knight,
As fearlessly and well;
Till utter darkness closed her wing
O'er their thin host and wounded King.
Then skilful Surrey's sage commands
Led back from strife his shatter'd bands;
And from the charge they drew,
As mountain-waves, from wasted lands,
Sweep back to ocean blue.
Then did their loss his foemen know;
Their King, their Lords, their mightiest low,
They melted from the field as snow,
When streams are swoln and south winds blow,
Dissolves in silent dew.
Tweed's echoes heard the ceaseless plash,
While many a broken band,
Disorder'd, through her currents dash,
To gain the Scottish land;
To town and tower, to down and dale,

To tell red Flodden's dismal tale,
And raise the universal wail.
Tradition, legend, tune, and song,
Shall many an age that wail prolong:
Still from the sire the son shall hear
Of the stern strife, and carnage drear,
Of Flodden's fatal field,
Where shiver'd was fair Scotland's spear,
And broken was her shield!

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

BONNY DUNDEE

To the Lords of Convention 'twas Claver'se who spoke,
'Ere the King's crown shall fall there are crowns to be broke;
So let each Cavalier who loves honour and me,
Come follow the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.

'Come fill up my cup, come fill up my can,
Come saddle your horses, and call up your men;
Come open the West Port, and let me gang free,
And it 's room for the bonnets of Bonny Dundee!'

Dundee he is mounted, he rides up the street,
The bells are rung backward, the drums they are beat;
But the Provost, douce man, said, 'Just e'en let him be,
The Gude Town is weel quit of that Deil of Dundee.'
Come fill up my cup, &c.

As he rode down the sanctified bends of the Bow,
Ilk carline was flyting and shaking her pow;
But the young plants of grace they look'd couthie and slee,
Thinking, 'Luck to thy bonnet, thou Bonny Dundee!'

Come fill up my cup, &c.

With sour-featured Whigs the Grass-market was cramm'd
As if half the West had set tryst to be hang'd;
There was spite in each look, there was fear in each e'e,
As they watch'd for the bonnets of Bonny Dundee.

Come fill up my cup, &c.

These cowls of Kilmarnock had spits and had spears,
And lang-hafted gullies to kill Cavaliers;
But they shrunk to close-heads, and the causeway was free,
At the toss of the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.

Come fill up my cup, &c.

He spurr'd to the foot of the proud Castle rock,
And with the gay Gordon he gallantly spoke;
'Let Mons Meg and her marrows speak twa words or three,
For the love of the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.'

Come fill up my cup, &c.

The Gordon demands of him which way he goes—
'Where'er shall direct me the shade of Montrose!
Your Grace in short space shall hear tidings of me,
Or that low lies the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.

Come fill up my cup, &c.

'There are hills beyond Pentland, and lands beyond Forth,
If there 's lords in the Lowlands, there 's chiefs in the North;
There are wild Duniewassals, three thousand times three,
Will cry *hoigh!* for the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.
Come fill up my cup, &c.

'There 's brass on the target of barken'd bull-hide;
There 's steel in the scabbard that dangles beside;
The brass shall be burnish'd, the steel shall flash free,
At a toss of the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.
Come fill up my cup, &c.

'Away to the hills, to the caves, to the rocks—
Ere I own an usurper, I'll couch with the fox;
And tremble, false Whigs, in the midst of your glee,
You have not seen the last of my bonnet and me!'
Come fill up my cup, &c.

He waved his proud hand, and the trumpets were blown,
The kettle-drums clash'd, and the horsemen rode on,
Till on Ravelston's cliffs and on Clermiston's lee
Died away the wild war-notes of Bonny Dundee.

Come fill up my cup, come fill up my can,
Come saddle the horses and call up the men,
Come open your gates, and let me gae free,
For it 's up with the bonnets of Bonny Dundee!

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

SOLDIER, REST

Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,
Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking;
Dream of battled fields no more,
Days of danger, nights of waking.
In our isle's enchanted hall,
Hands unseen thy couch are strewing,
Fairy strains of music fall,
Every sense in slumber dewing.
Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,
Dream of fighting fields no more:
Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking,
Morn of toil, nor night of waking.

No rude sound shall reach thine ear,
Armour's clang, or war-steed champing,
Trump nor pibroch summon here
Mustering clan, or squadron tramping.
Yet the lark's shrill fife may come
At the daybreak from the fallow,
And the bittern sound his drum,
Booming from the sedgy shallow.
Ruder sounds shall none be near;
Guards nor warders challenge here,
Here 's no war-steed's neigh and champing,
Shouting clans, or squadrons stamping.

Sir Walter Scott.

AFTER BLENHEIM

It was a summer evening,
Old Kaspar's work was done,
And he before his cottage door
Was sitting in the sun;
And by him sported on the green
His little grandchild Wilhelmine.

She saw her brother Peterkin
Roll something large and round
Which he beside the rivulet
In playing there had found;
He came to ask what he had found
That was so large and smooth and round.

Old Kaspar took it from the boy
Who stood expectant by;
And then the old man shook his head,
And with a natural sigh
'"Tis some poor fellow's skull,' said he,
'Who fell in the great victory.

'I find them in the garden,
For there 's many here about;
And often when I go to plough
The ploughshare turns them out.
For many thousand men,' said he,
'Were slain in that great victory.'

'Now tell us what 'twas all about,'
Young Peterkin he cries;
And little Wilhelmine looks up
With wonder-waiting eyes;
'Now tell us all about the war,
And what they fought each other for.'

'It was the English,' Kaspar cried,
'Who put the French to rout;
But what they fought each other for
I could not well make out.
But every body said,' quoth he,
'That 'twas a famous victory.

'My father lived at Blenheim then,
Yon little stream hard by;
They burnt his dwelling to the ground,
And he was forced to fly:
So with his wife and child he fled,
Nor had he where to rest his head.

'With fire and sword the country round
Was wasted far and wide,
And many a childing mother then
And new-born baby died:
But things like that, you know, must be
At every famous victory.

'They say it was a shocking sight
After the field was won;
For many thousand bodies here
Lay rotting in the sun:
But things like that, you know, must be
After a famous victory.

'Great praise the Duke of Marlbro' won
And our good Prince Eugene;'
'Why, 'twas a very wicked thing!'
Said little Wilhelmine;
'Nay . . nay . . my little girl,' quoth he,
'It was a famous victory.

'And every body praised the Duke
Who this great fight did win.'
'But what good came of it at last?'
Quoth little Peterkin:—
'Why, that I cannot tell,' said he,
'But 'twas a famous victory.'

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

HOHENLINDEN

On Linden when the sun was low,
All bloodless lay the untrodden snow,
And dark as winter was the flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.
But Linden saw another sight
When the drum beat at dead of night,
Commanding fires of death to light
The darkness of her scenery.

By torch and trumpet fast array'd,
Each horseman drew his battle-blade,
And furious every charger neigh'd
To join the dreadful revelry.
Then shook the hills with thunder riven,
Then rush'd the steed to battle driven,
And louder than the bolts of heaven
Far flash'd the red artillery!

But redder yet that light shall glow
On Linden's hills of stainèd snow,
And bloodier yet the torrent flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.
'Tis morn, but scarce yon level sun
Can pierce the war-clouds rolling dun,
When furious Frank and fiery Hun
Shout in their sulphurous canopy!

The combat deepens, On, ye brave,
Who rush to glory or the grave!
Wave, Munich! all thy banners wave,
And charge with all thy chivalry.
Few, few shall part where many meet!
The snow shall be their winding-sheet,
And every turf beneath their feet
Shall be a soldier's sepulchre.

THOMAS CAMPBELL.

YE MARINERS OF ENGLAND

A NAVAL ODE

YE Mariners of England
That guard our native seas,
Whose flag has braved, a thousand years,
The battle and the breeze—
Your glorious standard launch again
To match another foe!
And sweep through the deep,
While the stormy winds do blow,—
While the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

The spirits of your fathers
Shall start from every wave!
For the deck it was their field of fame,
And Ocean was their grave.
Where Blake and mighty Nelson fell
Your manly hearts shall glow,
As ye sweep through the deep,
While the stormy winds do blow,—
While the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

Britannia needs no bulwarks,
No towers along the steep;
Her march is o'er the mountain waves,
Her home is on the deep.
With thunders from her native oak
She quells the floods below,
As they roar on the shore
When the stormy winds do blow,—
When the battle rages loud and long
And the stormy winds do blow.

The meteor flag of England
Shall yet terrific burn,
Till danger's troubled night depart
And the star of peace return.
Then, then, ye ocean warriors!
Our song and feast shall flow
To the fame of your name,
When the storm has ceased to blow.—
When the fiery fight is heard no more,
And the storm has ceased to blow.

THOMAS CAMPBELL.

THE BATTLE OF THE BALTIC

OF Nelson and the North
Sing the glorious day's renown,
When to battle fierce came forth
All the might of Denmark's crown,
And her arms along the deep proudly shone,—
By each gun the lighted brand
In a bold determined hand;
And the Prince of all the land
Led them on.

Like leviathans afloat
Lay their bulwarks on the brine,
While the sign of battle flew
On the lofty British line :
It was ten of April morn by the chime :
As they drifted on their path
There was silence deep as death,
And the boldest held his breath
For a time.

But the might of England flushed
To anticipate the scene ;
And her van the fleeter rushed
O'er the deadly space between.
'Hearts of oak!' our captain cried ; when each gun
From its adamantine lips
Spread a death-shade round the ships,
Like the hurricane eclipse
Of the sun.

Again ! again ! again !
And the havoc did not slack,
Till a feeble cheer the Dane
To our cheering sent us back :
Their shots along the deep slowly boom ;
Then ceased—and all is wail
As they strike the shattered sail,
Or in conflagration pale
Light the gloom.

Out spoke the victor then
As he hailed them o'er the wave,
'Ye are brothers ! ye are men !
And we conquer but to save ;

So peace instead of death let us bring:
But yield, proud foe, thy fleet
With the crews at England's feet,
And make submission meet
To our King.'

Then Denmark blessed our chief
That he gave her wounds repose;
And the sounds of joy and grief
From her people wildly rose,
As death withdrew his shades from the day;
While the sun looked smiling bright
O'er a wide and woful sight,
Where the fires of funeral light
Died away.

Now joy, Old England, raise
For the tidings of thy might
By the festal cities' blaze,
While the wine-cup shines in light;
And yet, amidst that joy and uproar,
Let us think of them that sleep,
Full many a fathom deep,
By thy wild and stormy steep,
Elsinore!

Brave hearts! to Britain's pride
Once so faithful and so true,
On the deck of fame that died
With the gallant good Riou—
Soft sigh the winds of heaven o'er their grave!
While the billow mournful rolls
And the mermaid's song condoles,
Singing glory to the souls
Of the brave!

THOMAS CAMPBELL.

UPON THE PLAINS OF FLANDERS

Upon the plains of Flanders
Our fathers long ago,
They fought like Alexanders,
Beneath old Marlborough;
And still in fields of conquest,
Our valour bright has shone,
With Wolfe and Abercrombie,
And Moore and Wellington.

Our plumes have waved in combats,
That ne'er shall be forgot,
Where many a mighty squadron,
Reel'd backwards from our shot.
In charges with our bayonet,
We led our bold compeers;
But Frenchmen like to stay not
For British Grenadiers.

Once bravely at Vimeira,
They hoped to play their parts;
And sing fal, lira, lira,
To cheer their drooping hearts.
But English, Scotch, and Paddy whacks,
We gave three hearty cheers;
And the French soon turned their backs
To the British Grenadiers.

At St. Sebastian,
And Badajos' town,
Though raging like volcanoes
The shell and shot came down,
With courage never wincing,
We scaled the ramparts high,
And waved the British ensign
In glorious victory.

But what could Bonaparte,
With all his Curassiers,
In battle do, at Waterloo,
With British Grenadiers?
Then ever sweet the drum shall beat
That march into our ears,
Whose martial roll awakes the soul
Of the British Grenadiers.

THOMAS CAMPBELL.

BATTLE SONG

DAY, like our souls, is fiercely dark;
What then? 'Tis day!
We sleep no more; the cock crows—hark!
To arms! away!
They come! they come! the knell is rung
Of us or them;
Wide o'er their march the pomp is flung
Of gold and gem.
What collar'd hound of lawless sway,
To famine dear—
What pension'd slave of Attila,
Leads in the rear?
Come they from Scythian wilds afar,
Our blood to spill?
Wear they the livery of the Czar?
They do his will.
Nor tassell'd silk, nor epaulet,
Nor plume, nor torse—
No splendour gilds, all sternly met,
Our foot and horse.
But, dark and still, we inly glow,
Condensed in ire!

Strike, tawdry slaves, and ye shall know
Our gloom is fire.
In vain your pomp, ye evil powers,
Insults the land;
Wrongs, vengeance, and the Cause are ours,
And God's right hand!
Madmen! they trample into snakes
The wormy clod!
Like fire, beneath their feet awakes
The sword of God!
Behind, before, above, below
They rouse the brave;
Where'er they go, they make a foe,
Or find a grave.

EBENEZER ELLIOTT.

THE ONSET

A BATTLE SONG

SOUND an alarum! The foe is come!
I hear the tramp—the neigh—the hum,
The cry, and the blow of his daring drum:
Huzzah!
Sound! The blast of our trumpet blown
Shall carry dismay into hearts of stone:
What! shall we shake at a foe unknown?
Huzzah!—Huzzah!

Have we not sinews as strong as they?
Have we not hearts that ne'er give way?
Have we not GOD on our side to-day?
Huzzah!
Look! They are staggered on yon black heath!
Steady awhile, and hold your breath!
Now is your time, men,—Down like Death!
Huzzah!—Huzzah!

Stand by each other, and front your foes!
Fight, whilst a drop of the red blood flows!
Fight, as ye fought for the old red rose!
Huzzah!
Sound! Bid your terrible trumpets bray!
Blow, till their brazen throats give way!
Sound to the battle! Sound, I say!
Huzzah!—Huzzah!

BARRY CORNWALL.

WATERLOO

THERE was a sound of revelry by night,
And Belgium's capital had gather'd then
Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright
The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men;
A thousand hearts beat happily; and when
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes look'd love to eyes which spake again,
And all went merry as a marriage bell;
But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a rising knell!

Did ye not hear it?—No; 'twas but the wind,
Or the car rattling o'er the stony street;
On with the dance! let joy be unconfined;
No sleep till morn, when Youth and Pleasure meet
To chase the glowing Hours with flying feet—
But hark!—that heavy sound breaks in once more,
As if the clouds its echo would repeat;
And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before!
Arm! Arm! it is—it is—the cannon's opening roar!

Within a window'd niche of that high hall
Sate Brunswick's fated chieftain; he did hear
That sound the first amidst the festival,
And caught its tone with Death's prophetic ear;
And when they smiled because he deem'd it near,
His heart more truly knew that peal too well
Which stretch'd his father on a bloody bier,
And roused the vengeance blood alone could quell;
He rush'd into the field, and, foremost fighting, fell.

Ah! then and there was hurrying to and fro,
And gathering tears, and tremblings of distress,
And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago
Blush'd at the praise of their own loveliness;
And there were sudden partings, such as press
The life from out young hearts, and choking sighs
Which ne'er might be repeated; who could guess
If ever more should meet those mutual eyes,
Since upon night so sweet such awful morn could rise!

And there was mounting in hot haste: the steed,
The mustering squadron, and the clattering car,
Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,
And swiftly forming in the ranks of war;
And the deep thunder peal on peal afar;
And near, the beat of the alarming drum
Roused up the soldier ere the morning star;
While throng'd the citizens with terror dumb,
Or whispering, with white lips—'The foe! they come! they come!'

And wild and high the 'Cameron's gathering' rose!
The war-note of Lochiel, which Albyn's hills
Have heard, and heard, too, have her Saxon foes:—
How in the noon of night that pibroch thrills,

Savage and shrill! But with the breath which fills
Their mountain-pipe, so fill the mountaineers
With the fierce native daring which instils
The stirring memory of a thousand years,
And Evan's, Donald's fame rings in each clansman's ears!

And Ardennes waves above them her green leaves,
Dewy with nature's tear-drops as they pass,
Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves,
Over the unreturning brave,—alas!
Ere evening to be trodden like the grass
Which now beneath them, but above shall grow
In its next verdure, when this fiery mass
Of living valour, rolling on the foe
And burning with high hope shall moulder cold and low.

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,
Last eve in Beauty's circle proudly gay,
The midnight brought the signal-sound of strife,
The morn the marshalling in arms,—the day
Battle's magnificently stern array!
The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which when rent
The earth is cover'd thick with other clay,
Which her own clay shall cover, heap'd and pent,
Rider and horse,—friend, foe,—in one red burial blent!

LORD BYRON.

THE BURIAL OF SIR JOHN MOORE AT CORUNNA

Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,
As his corse to the rampart we hurried;
Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot
O'er the grave where our hero we buried.

We buried him darkly at dead of night,
The sods with our bayonets turning;
By the struggling moonbeam's misty light
And the lantern dimly burning.

No useless coffin enclosed his breast,
Not in sheet nor in shroud we wound him;
But he lay like a warrior taking his rest
With his martial cloak around him.

Few and short were the prayers we said,
And we spoke not a word of sorrow;
But we steadfastly gazed on the face that was dead,
And we bitterly thought of the morrow.

We thought, as we hollowed his narrow bed
And smoothed down his lonely pillow,
That the foe and the stranger would tread o'er his head,
And we far away on the billow!

Lightly they'll talk of the spirit that 's gone
And o'er his cold ashes upbraid him,—
But little he'll reck, if they let him sleep on
In the grave where a Briton has laid him.

But half of our heavy task was done
When the clock struck the hour for retiring:
And we heard the distant and random gun
That the foe was sullenly firing.

Slowly and sadly we laid him down,
From the field of his fame fresh and gory;
We carved not a line, and we raised not a stone—
But we left him alone with his glory.

CHARLES WOLFE.

THE OLD NAVY

THE captain stood on the carronade: 'First lieutenant,' says he,
'Send all my merry men aft here, for they must list to me;
I haven't the gift of the gab, my sons—because I'm bred to the sea;
That ship there is a Frenchman, who means to fight with we.
And odds bobs, hammer and tongs, long as I've been to sea,
I've fought 'gainst every odds—but I've gained the victory!

That ship there is a Frenchman, and if we don't take *she*,
'Tis a thousand bullets to one, that she will capture *we*;
I haven't the gift of the gab, my boys; so each man to his gun;
If she 's not mine in half an hour, I'll flog each mother's son.

For odds bobs, hammer and tongs, long as I've
been to sea,
I've fought 'gainst every odds—and I've gained
the victory!'

We fought for twenty minutes, when the French-
man had enough;
'I little thought', said he, 'that your men were of
such stuff';
Our captain took the Frenchman's sword, a low
bow made to *he*;
'I haven't the gift of the gab, monsieur, but polite
I wish to be.
And odds bobs, hammer and tongs, long as I've
been to sea,
I've fought 'gainst every odds—and I've gained
the victory!'

Our captain sent for all of us: 'My merry men,'
said he,
'I haven't the gift of the gab, my lads, but yet
I thankful be:
You've done your duty handsomely, each man stood
to his gun;
If you hadn't, you villains, as sure as day, I'd have
flogged each mother's son.
For odds bobs, hammer and tongs, as long as
I'm at sea,
I'll fight 'gainst every odds—and I'll gain the
victory!'

FREDERICK MARRYAT.

THE FALL OF D'ASSAS

Alone through gloomy forest-shades
A soldier went by night;
No moonbeam pierced the dusky glades,
No star shed guiding light.

Yet on his vigil's midnight round
The youth all cheerly passed;
Unchecked by aught of boding sound
That muttered in the blast.

Where were his thoughts that lonely hour?
—In his far home, perchance;
His father's hall, his mother's bower,
'Midst the gay vines of France:

Wandering from battles lost and won,
To hear and bless again
The rolling of the wide Garonne,
Or murmur of the Seine.

Hush! hark! did stealing steps go by.
Came not faint whispers near?
No! the wild wind hath many a sigh,
Amidst the foliage sere.

Hark, yet again!—and from his hand
What grasp hath wrenched the blade?
—Oh, single 'midst a hostile band,
Young soldier! thou'rt betrayed!

'Silence!' in undertones they cry,
'No whisper—not a breath!
The sound that warns thy comrades nigh
Shall sentence thee to death!'

—Still, at the bayonet's point he stood,
And strong to meet the blow;
And shouted, 'midst his rushing blood,
'Arm, arm, Auvergne! the foe!'

The stir, the tramp, the bugle-call—
He heard their tumults grow;
And sent his dying voice through all—
'*Auvergne, Auvergne! the foe!*'

FELICIA HEMANS.

THE HERO'S DEATH

LIFE'S parting beams were in his eye,
Life's closing accents on his tongue,
When round him, pealing to the sky,
The shout of victory rung!

Then, ere his gallant spirit fled,
A smile so bright illumed his face—
Oh! never, of the light it shed,
Shall memory lose a trace!

His was a death, whose rapture high
Transcended all that life could yield;
His warmest prayer was so to die,
On the red battle-field!

And they may feel, who loved him most,
A pride so holy and so pure:
Fate hath no power o'er those who boast
A treasure thus secure!

FELICIA HEMANS.

THE CAVALIER'S SONG

A STEED! a steed of matchlesse speed,
A sword of metal keene!
All else to noble heartes is drosse,
All else on earth is meane.
The neighyinge of the war-horse prowde,
The rowlinge of the drum,
The clangor of the trumpet lowde,
Be soundes from heaven that come;
And O! the thundering presse of knightes
Whenas their war cryes swell,
May tole from heaven an angel brighte,
And rouse a fiend from hell.

Then mounte! then mounte, brave gallants all,
And don your helmes amaine:
Deathe's couriers, Fame and Honor, call
Us to the field againe.
No shrewish tears shall fill our eye
When the sword-hilt's in our hand,—
Heart whole we'll part, and no whit sighe
For the fayrest of the land!
Let piping swaine, and craven wight,
Thus weepe and puling crye,
Our business is like men to fight,
And hero-like to die!

WILLIAM MOTHERWELL.

HORATIUS[1]

A LAY MADE ABOUT THE YEAR OF THE CITY CCCLX

Lars Porsena of Clusium
By the Nine Gods he swore
That the great house of Tarquin
Should suffer wrong no more.
By the Nine Gods he swore it,
And named a trysting day,
And bade his messengers ride forth,
East and west and south and north,
To summon his array.

East and west and south and north
The messengers ride fast,
And tower and town and cottage
Have heard the trumpet's blast.
Shame on the false Etruscan
Who lingers in his home,
When Porsena of Clusium
Is on the march for Rome.

And now hath every city
Sent up her tale of men;
The foot are fourscore thousand,
The horse are thousands ten:
Before the gates of Sutrium
Is met the great array.
A proud man was Lars Porsena
Upon the trysting day.

For all the Etruscan armies
Were ranged beneath his eye,
And many a banished Roman,
And many a stout ally;

[1] This selection omits some of the stanzas of the complete poem.

And with a mighty following
To join the muster came
The Tusculan Mamilius,
Prince of the Latian name.

But by the yellow Tiber
Was tumult and affright:
From all the spacious champaign
To Rome men took their flight.
A mile around the city,
The throng stopped up the ways;
A fearful sight it was to see
Through two long nights and days.

To eastward and to westward
Have spread the Tuscan bands;
Nor house, nor fence, nor dovecote
In Crustumerium stands.
Verbenna down to Ostia
Hath wasted all the plain;
Astur hath stormed Janiculum,
And the stout guards are slain.

I wis, in all the Senate,
There was no heart so bold,
But sore it ached and fast it beat,
When that ill news was told.
Forthwith up rose the Consul,
Up rose the Fathers all;
In haste they girded up their gowns,
And hied them to the wall.

They held a council standing
Before the River-Gate;
Short time was there, ye well may guess,
For musing or debate.

Out spake the Consul roundly
'The bridge must straight go down;
For, since Janiculum is lost,
Nought else can save the town.'

Just then a scout came flying,
All wild with haste and fear;
'To arms! to arms! Sir Consul:
Lars Porsena is here.'
On the low hills to westward
The Consul fixed his eye,
And saw the swarthy storm of dust
Rise fast along the sky.

And nearer fast and nearer
Doth the red whirlwind come;
And louder still and still more loud,
From underneath that rolling cloud,
Is heard the trumpet's war-note proud,
The trampling, and the hum.
And plainly and more plainly
Now through the gloom appears,
Far to left and far to right,
In broken gleams of dark-blue light,
The long array of helmets bright,
The long array of spears.

But the Consul's brow was sad,
And the Consul's speech was low,
And darkly looked he at the wall,
And darkly at the foe.
'Their van will be upon us
Before the bridge goes down;
And if they once may win the bridge,
What hope to save the town?'

Then out spake brave Horatius,
The Captain of the Gate:
'To every man upon this earth
Death cometh soon or late.
And how can man die better
Than facing fearful odds,
For the ashes of his fathers,
And the temples of his Gods,

'And for the tender mother
Who dandled him to rest,
And for the wife who nurses
His baby at her breast,
And for the holy maidens
Who feed the eternal flame,
To save them from false Sextus
That wrought the deed of shame?

'Hew down the bridge, Sir Consul,
With all the speed ye may;
I, with two more to help me,
Will hold the foe in play.
In yon strait path a thousand
May well be stopped by three.
Now who will stand on either hand,
And keep the bridge with me?'

Then out spake Spurius Lartius;
A Ramnian proud was he:
'Lo, I will stand at thy right hand,
And keep the bridge with thee.'
And out spake strong Herminius;
Of Titian blood was he:
'I will abide on thy left side,
And keep the bridge with thee.'

'Horatius,' quoth the Consul,
'As thou sayest, so let it be.'
And straight against that great array
Forth went the dauntless Three.
For Romans in Rome's quarrel
Spared neither land nor gold,
Nor son nor wife, nor limb nor life,
In the brave days of old.

The Three stood calm and silent,
And looked upon the foes,
And a great shout of laughter
From all the vanguard rose:
And forth three chiefs came spurring
Before that deep array;
To earth they sprang, their swords they drew,
And lifted high their shields, and flew
To win the narrow way;

Aunus from green Tifernum,
Lord of the Hill of Vines;
And Seius, whose eight hundred slaves
Sicken in Ilva's mines;
And Picus, long to Clusium
Vassal in peace and war,
Who led to fight his Umbrian powers
From that grey crag where, girt with towers,
The fortress of Nequinum lowers
O'er the pale waves of Nar.

Stout Lartius hurled down Aunus
Into the stream beneath:
Herminius struck at Seius,
And clove him to the teeth:
At Picus brave Horatius
Darted one fiery thrust;
And the proud Umbrian's gilded arms
Clashed in the bloody dust.

Then Ocnus of Falerii
Rushed on the Roman Three;
And Lausulus of Urgo,
The rover of the sea;
And Aruns of Volsinium,
Who slew the great wild boar,
The great wild boar that had his den
Amidst the reeds of Cosa's fen,
And wasted fields, and slaughtered men,
Along Albinia's shore.

Herminius smote down Aruns:
Lartius laid Ocnus low:
Right to the heart of Lausulus
Horatius sent a blow.
'Lie there,' he cried, 'fell pirate!
No more, aghast and pale,
From Ostia's walls the crowd shall mark
The track of thy destroying bark.
No more Campania's hinds shall fly
To woods and caverns when they spy
Thy thrice accursèd sail.'

But now no sound of laughter
Was heard among the foes.
A wild and wrathful clamour
From all the vanguard rose.
Six spears' lengths from the entrance
Halted that deep array,
And for a space no man came forth
To win the narrow way.

But hark! the cry is Astur:
And lo! the ranks divide;
And the great Lord of Luna
Comes with his stately stride.

Upon his ample shoulders
Clangs loud the fourfold shield,
And in his hand he shakes the brand
Which none but he can wield.

He smiled on those bold Romans
A smile serene and high;
He eyed the flinching Tuscans,
And scorn was in his eye.
Quoth he, 'The she-wolf's litter
Stand savagely at bay:
But will ye dare to follow,
If Astur clears the way?'

Then, whirling up his broadsword
With both hands to the height,
He rushed against Horatius,
And smote with all his might.
With shield and blade Horatius
Right deftly turned the blow.
The blow, though turned, came yet too nigh;
It missed his helm, but gashed his thigh:
The Tuscans raised a joyful cry
To see the red blood flow.

He reeled, and on Herminius
He leaned one breathing-space;
Then, like a wild cat mad with wounds,
Sprang right at Astur's face:
Through teeth, and skull, and helmet
So fierce a thrust he sped,
The good sword stood a hand-breadth out
Behind the Tuscan's head.

And the great Lord of Luna
Fell at that deadly stroke,
As falls on Mount Alvernus
A thunder-smitten oak.

Far o'er the crashing forest
The giant arms lie spread;
And the pale augurs, muttering low,
Gaze on the blasted head.

On Astur's throat Horatius
Right firmly pressed his heel,
And thrice and four times tugged amain,
Ere he wrenched out the steel.
'And see,' he cried, 'the welcome
Fair guests, that waits you here!
What noble Lucumo comes next
To taste our Roman cheer?'

But at his haughty challenge
A sullen murmur ran,
Mingled of wrath, and shame, and dread,
Along that glittering van.
There lacked not men of prowess,
Nor men of lordly race;
For all Etruria's noblest
Were round the fatal place.

But all Etruria's noblest
Felt their hearts sink to see
On the earth the bloody corpses,
In the path the dauntless Three:
And, from the ghastly entrance
Where those bold Romans stood,
All shrank, like boys who unaware,
Ranging the woods to start a hare,
Come to the mouth of the dark lair
Where, growling low, a fierce old bear
Lies amidst bones and blood.

Was none who would be foremost
To lead such dire attack:
But those behind cried 'Forward!'
And those before cried 'Back!'
And backward now and forward
Wavers the deep array;
And on the tossing sea of steel,
To and fro the standards reel;
And the victorious trumpet-peal
Dies fitfully away.

But meanwhile axe and lever
Have manfully been plied;
And now the bridge hangs tottering
Above the boiling tide.
'Come back, come back, Horatius!'
Loud cried the Fathers all.
'Back, Lartius! back, Herminius!
Back, ere the ruin fall!'

Back darted Spurius Lartius;
Herminius darted back:
And, as they passed, beneath their feet
They felt the timbers crack.
But when they turned their faces,
And on the farther shore
Saw brave Horatius stand alone,
They would have crossed once more.

But with a crash like thunder
Fell every loosened beam,
And, like a dam, the mighty wreck
Lay right athwart the stream:
And a long shout of triumph
Rose from the walls of Rome,
As to the highest turret-tops
Was splashed the yellow foam.

And, like a horse unbroken
When first he feels the rein,
The furious river struggled hard,
And tossed his tawny mane,
And burst the curb, and bounded,
Rejoicing to be free,
And whirling down, in fierce career,
Battlement, and plank, and pier,
Rushed headlong to the sea.

Alone stood brave Horatius,
But constant still in mind;
Thrice thirty thousand foes before,
And the broad flood behind.
'Down with him!' cried false Sextus,
With a smile on his pale face.
'Now yield thee,' cried Lars Porsena,
'Now yield thee to our grace.'

Round turned he, as not deigning
Those craven ranks to see;
Nought spake he to Lars Porsena,
To Sextus nought spake he;
But he saw on Palatinus
The white porch of his home;
And he spake to the noble river
That rolls by the towers of Rome.

'Oh, Tiber! father Tiber!
To whom the Romans pray,
A Roman's life, a Roman's arms,
Take thou in charge this day!'
So he spake, and speaking sheathed
The good sword by his side,
And with his harness on his back,
Plunged headlong in the tide.

No sound of joy or sorrow
Was heard from either bank;
But friends and foes in dumb surprise,
With parted lips and straining eyes,
Stood gazing where he sank;
And when above the surges
They saw his crest appear,
All Rome sent forth a rapturous cry,
And even the ranks of Tuscany
Could scarce forbear to cheer.

But fiercely ran the current,
Swollen high by months of rain:
And fast his blood was flowing;
And he was sore in pain,
And heavy with his armour,
And spent with changing blows;
And oft they thought him sinking,
But still again he rose.

Never, I ween, did swimmer,
In such an evil case,
Struggle through such a raging flood
Safe to the landing place:
But his limbs were borne up bravely
By the brave heart within,
And our good father Tiber
Bore bravely up his chin.

'Curse on him!' quoth false Sextus;
'Will not the villain drown?
But for this stay, ere close of day
We should have sacked the town!'
'Heaven help him!' quoth Lars Porsena,
'And bring him safe to shore;
For such a gallant feat of arms
Was never seen before.'

And now he feels the bottom;
  Now on dry earth he stands;
Now round him throng the Fathers
  To press his gory hands;
And now, with shouts and clapping,
  And noise of weeping loud,
He enters through the River-Gate,
  Borne by the joyous crowd.

They gave him of the corn-land,
  That was of public right,
As much as two strong oxen
  Could plough from morn till night;
And they made a molten image,
  And set it up on high,
And there it stands unto this day
  To witness if I lie.

It stands in the Comitium,
  Plain for all folk to see;
Horatius in his harness,
  Halting upon one knee:
And underneath is written,
  In letters all of gold,
How valiantly he kept the bridge
  In the brave days of old.

LORD MACAULAY.

THE ARMADA

A FRAGMENT

Attend, all ye who list to hear our noble England's praise;
I tell of the thrice famous deeds she wrought in ancient days,
When that great fleet invincible against her bore in vain
The richest spoils of Mexico, the stoutest hearts of Spain.

It was about the lovely close of a warm summer day,
There came a gallant merchant-ship full sail to Plymouth Bay;
Her crew hath seen Castile's black fleet, beyond Aurigny's isle,
At earliest twilight, on the waves lie heaving many a mile.
At sunrise she escaped their van, by God's especial grace;
And the tall Pinta, till the noon, had held her close in chase.
Forthwith a guard at every gun was placed along the wall;
The beacon blazed upon the roof of Edgecumbe's lofty hall;
Many a light fishing-bark put out to pry along the coast,
And with loose rein and bloody spur rode inland many a post.
With his white hair unbonneted, the stout old sheriff comes;

Behind him march the halberdiers; before him sound the drums;
His yeomen round the market cross make clear an ample space;
For there behoves him to set up the standard of Her Grace.
And haughtily the trumpets peal, and gaily dance the bells,
As slow upon the labouring wind the royal blazon swells.
Look how the Lion of the sea lifts up his ancient crown,
And underneath his deadly paw treads the gay lilies down.
So stalked he when he turned to flight, on that famed Picard field,
Bohemia's plume, and Genoa's bow, and Caesar's eagle shield.
So glared he when at Agincourt in wrath he turned to bay,
And crushed and torn beneath his claws the princely hunters lay.
Ho! strike the flagstaff deep, Sir Knight: ho! scatter flowers, fair maids:
Ho! gunners, fire a loud salute: ho! gallants, draw your blades:
Thou sun, shine on her joyously; ye breezes, waft her wide;
Our glorious SEMPER EADEM, the banner of our pride.
The freshening breeze of eve unfurled that banner's massy fold;
The parting gleam of sunshine kissed that haughty scroll of gold;
Night sank upon the dusky beech, and on the purple sea,

Such night in England ne'er had been, nor e'er
again shall be.
From Eddystone to Berwick bounds, from Lynn
to Milford Bay,
That time of slumber was as bright and busy as
the day;
For swift to east and swift to west the ghastly war-
flame spread,
High on St. Michael's Mount it shone: it shone on
Beachy Head.
Far on the deep the Spaniard saw, along each
southern shire,
Cape beyond cape, in endless range, those twinkling
points of fire.
The fisher left his skiff to rock on Tamar's glittering
waves:
The rugged miners poured to war from Mendip's
sunless caves:
O'er Longleat's towers, o'er Cranbourne's oaks, the
fiery herald flew:
He roused the shepherds of Stonehenge, the rangers
of Beaulieu.
Right sharp and quick the bells all night rang out
from Bristol town,
And ere the day three hundred horse had met on
Clifton down;
The sentinel on Whitehall gate looked forth into
the night,
And saw o'erhanging Richmond Hill the streak of
blood-red light,
Then bugle's note and cannon's roar the deathlike
silence broke,
And with one start, and with one cry, the royal city
woke.
At once on all her stately gates arose the answering
fires;

At once the wild alarum clashed from all her reeling spires ;
From all the batteries of the Tower pealed loud the voice of fear ;
And all the thousand masts of Thames sent back a louder cheer ;
And from the furthest wards was heard the rush of hurrying feet,
And the broad streams of pikes and flags rushed down each roaring street ;
And broader still became the blaze, and louder still the din,
As fast from every village round the horse came spurring in :
And eastward straight from wild Blackheath the warlike errand went,
And roused in many an ancient hall the gallant squires of Kent.
Southward from Surrey's pleasant hills flew those bright couriers forth ;
High on bleak Hampstead's swarthy moor they started for the north ;
And on, and on, without a pause, untired they bounded still :
All night from tower to tower they sprang ; they sprang from hill to hill :
Till the proud peak unfurled the flag o'er Darwin's rocky dales,
Till like volcanoes flared to heaven the stormy hills of Wales,
Till twelve fair counties saw the blaze on Malvern's lonely height,
Till streamed in crimson on the wind the Wrekin's crest of light,
Till broad and fierce the star came forth on Ely's stately fane,

And tower and hamlet rose in arms o'er all the boundless plain;
Till Belvoir's lordly terraces the sign to Lincoln sent,
And Lincoln sped the message on o'er the wide vale of Trent;
Till Skiddaw saw the fire that burned on Gaunt's embattled pile,
And the red glare on Skiddaw roused the burghers of Carlisle.

LORD MACAULAY.

IVRY

A SONG OF THE HUGUENOTS

Now glory to the Lord of Hosts, from whom all glories are!
And glory to our Sovereign Liege, King Henry of Navarre!
Now let there be the merry sound of music and of dance,
Through thy corn-fields green, and sunny vines, oh pleasant land of France!
And thou, Rochelle, our own Rochelle, proud city of the waters,
Again let rapture light the eyes of all thy mourning daughters.
As thou wert constant in our ills, be joyous in our joy,
For cold, and stiff, and still are they who wrought thy walls annoy.
Hurrah! Hurrah! a single field hath turned the chance of war,
Hurrah! Hurrah! for Ivry, and Henry of Navarre.

Oh! how our hearts were beating, when, at the dawn of day,
We saw the army of the League drawn out in long array;
With all its priest-led citizens, and all its rebel peers,
And Appenzel's stout infantry, and Egmont's Flemish spears.
There rode the brood of false Lorraine, the curses of our land;
And dark Mayenne was in the midst, a truncheon in his hand:
And, as we looked on them, we thought of Seine's empurpled flood,
And good Coligni's hoary hair all dabbled with his blood;
And we cried unto the living God, who rules the fate of war,
To fight for His own holy name, and Henry of Navarre.

The King is come to marshal us, in all his armour drest,
And he has bound a snow-white plume upon his gallant crest.
He looked upon his people, and a tear was in his eye;
He looked upon the traitors, and his glance was stern and high.
Right graciously he smiled on us, as rolled from wing to wing,
Down all our line, a deafening shout, 'God save our Lord the King!'
'And if my standard-bearer fall, as fall full well he may,
For never saw I promise yet of such a bloody fray,

Press where ye see my white plume shine, amidst
the ranks of war,
And be your oriflamme to-day the helmet of
Navarre.'

Hurrah ! the foes are moving. Hark to the mingled
din
Of fife, and steed, and trump, and drum, and roaring
culverin.
The fiery Duke is pricking fast across Saint André's
plain,
With all the hireling chivalry of Guelders and
Almayne.
Now by the lips of those ye love, fair gentlemen of
France,
Charge for the golden lilies,—upon them with the
lance.
A thousand spurs are striking deep, a thousand
spears in rest,
A thousand knights are pressing close behind the
snow-white crest ;
And in they burst, and on they rushed, while like
a guiding star,
Amidst the thickest carnage blazed the helmet of
Navarre.

Now, God be praised, the day is ours. Mayenne
hath turned his rein.
D'Aumale hath cried for quarter. The Flemish
count is slain.
Their ranks are breaking like thin clouds before
a Biscay gale ;
The field is heaped with bleeding steeds, and flags,
and cloven mail.
And then we thought on vengeance, and, all along
our van,

'Remember St. Bartholomew,' was passed from man to man.
But out spake gentle Henry, 'No Frenchman is my foe:
Down, down with every foreigner, but let your brethren go.'
Oh! was there ever such a knight, in friendship or in war,
As our Sovereign Lord, King Henry, the soldier of Navarre?

Right well fought all the Frenchmen who fought for France to-day;
And many a lordly banner God gave them for a prey.
But we of the religion have borne us best in fight;
And the good Lord of Rosny has ta'en the cornet white.
Our own true Maximilian the cornet white hath ta'en,
The cornet white with crosses black, the flag of false Lorraine.
Up with it high; unfurl it wide; that all the host may know
How God hath humbled the proud house which wrought His church such woe.
Then on the ground, while trumpets sound their loudest point of war,
Fling the red shreds, a footcloth meet for Henry of Navarre.

Ho! maidens of Vienna; Ho! matrons of Lucerne;
Weep, weep, and rend your hair for those who never shall return.
Ho! Philip, send, for charity, thy Mexican pistoles,
That Antwerp monks may sing a mass for thy poor spearmen's souls.

Ho! gallant nobles of the League, look that your arms be bright;
Ho! burghers of Saint Genevieve, keep watch and ward to-night.
For our God hath crushed the tyrant, our God hath raised the slave,
And mocked the counsel of the wise, and the valour of the brave.
Then glory to His holy name, from whom all glories are;
And glory to our Sovereign Lord, King Henry of Navarre.

LORD MACAULAY.

THE BATTLE OF NASEBY

By Obadiah Bind-their-kings-in-chains-and-their-nobles-with-links-of-iron, sergeant in Ireton's regiment.

OH! wherefore come ye forth, in triumph from the North,
With your hands, and your feet, and your raiment all red?
And wherefore doth your rout send forth a joyous shout?
And whence be the grapes of the wine-press which ye tread?

Oh, evil was the root, and bitter was the fruit,
And crimson was the juice of the vintage that we trod;
For we trampled on the throng of the haughty and the strong,
Who sate in the high places, and slew the saints of God.

It was about the noon of a glorious day of June,
That we saw their banners dance and their cuirasses shine,
And the Man of Blood was there, with his long essenced hair,
And Astley, and Sir Marmaduke, and Rupert of the Rhine.

Like a servant of the Lord, with his Bible and his sword,
The General rode along us to form us to the fight,
When a murmuring sound broke out, and swell'd into a shout,
Among the godless horsemen upon the tyrant's right.

And hark! like the roar of the billows on the shore,
The cry of battle rises along their charging line!
For God! for the Cause! for the Church! for the Laws!
For Charles King of England, and Rupert of the Rhine!

The furious German comes, with his clarions and his drums,
His bravoes of Alsatia, and pages of Whitehall;
They are bursting on our flanks. Grasp your pikes, close your ranks;
For Rupert never comes but to conquer or to fall.

They are here! They rush on! We are broken! We are gone!
Our left is borne before them like stubble on the blast.

O Lord, put forth thy might! O Lord, defend the right!
Stand back to back, in God's name, and fight it to the last.

Stout Skippon hath a wound; the centre hath given ground:
Hark! hark!—What means the trampling of horsemen on our rear?
Whose banner do I see, boys? 'Tis he, thank God! 'tis he, boys.
Bear up another minute: brave Oliver is here.

Their heads all stooping low, their points all in a row,
Like a whirlwind on the trees, like a deluge on the dykes,
Our cuirassiers have burst on the ranks of the Accurst,
And at a shock have scattered the forest of his pikes.

Fast, fast, the gallants ride, in some safe nook to hide
Their coward heads, predestined to rot on Temple Bar:
And he—he turns, he flies:—shame on those cruel eyes
That bore to look on torture, and dare not look on war.

Ho! comrades, scour the plain; and, ere ye strip the slain,
First give another stab to make your search secure,
Then shake from sleeves and pockets their broad-pieces and lockets,
The tokens of the wanton, the plunder of the poor.

Fools! your doublets shone with gold, and your hearts were gay and bold,
When you kissed your lily hands to your lemans to-day;
And to-morrow shall the fox, from her chambers in the rocks,
Lead forth her tawny cubs to howl above the prey.

Where be your tongues that late mocked at heaven and hell and fate,
And the fingers that once were so busy with your blades,
Your perfum'd satin clothes, your catches and your oaths,
Your stage-plays and your sonnets, your diamonds and your spades?

Down, down, for ever down with the mitre and the crown,
With the Belial of the Court, and the Mammon of the Pope;
There is woe in Oxford Halls; there is wail in Durham's Stalls:
The Jesuit smites his bosom; the Bishop rends his cope.

And She of the seven hills shall mourn her children's ills,
And tremble when she thinks on the edge of England's sword;
And the Kings of earth in fear shall shudder when they hear
What the hand of God hath wrought for the Houses and the Word.

LORD MACAULAY.

SIR NICHOLAS AT MARSTON MOOR

To horse! to horse! Sir Nicholas, the clarion's
note is high!
To horse! to horse! Sir Nicholas, the big drum
makes reply!
Ere this hath Lucas marched, with his gallant
cavaliers,
And the bray of Rupert's trumpets grows fainter
in our ears.
To horse! to horse! Sir Nicholas! White Guy is
at the door,
And the raven whets his beak o'er the field of
Marston Moor.

Up rose the Lady Alice from her brief and broken
prayer,
And she brought a silken banner down the narrow
turret-stair;
Oh! many were the tears that those radiant eyes
had shed,
As she traced the bright word 'Glory' in the gay
and glancing thread;
And mournful was the smile which o'er those lovely
features ran,
As she said: 'It is your lady's gift; unfurl it in
the van!'

'It shall flutter, noble wench, where the best and
boldest ride
Midst the steel-clad files of Skippon, the black
dragoons of Pride;
The recreant heart of Fairfax shall feel a sicklier
qualm,
And the rebel lips of Oliver give out a louder psalm,

When they see my lady's gewgaw flaunt bravely on
their wing,
And hear her loyal soldier's shout, "For God and
for the King!"'

'Tis noon. The ranks are broken, along the royal line
They fly, the braggarts of the Court! the bullies
of the Rhine!
Stout Langley's cheer is heard no more, and Astley's
helm is down,
And Rupert sheathes his rapier, with a curse and
with a frown,
And cold Newcastle mutters, as he follows in their
flight,
'The German boar had better far have supped in
York to-night'.

The knight is left alone, his steel-cap cleft in twain,
His good buff jerkin crimsoned o'er with many
a gory stain;
Yet still he waves his banner, and cries amid the
rout,
'For Church and King, fair gentlemen! spur on,
and fight it out!'
And now he wards a Roundhead's pike, and now
he hums a stave,
And now he quotes a stage-play, and now he fells
a knave.

God aid thee now, Sir Nicholas! thou hast no
thought of fear;
God aid thee now, Sir Nicholas! but fearful odds
are here!
The rebels hem thee in, and at every cut and thrust,
'Down, down,' they cry, 'with Belial! down with
him to the dust!'

'I would,' quoth grim old Oliver, 'that Belial's
trusty sword
This day were doing battle for the Saints and for
the Lord!'

The Lady Alice sits with her maidens in her bower,
The grey-haired warder watches from the Castle's
topmost tower;
'What news? what news, old Hubert?'—'The
battle 's lost and won:
The royal troops are melting like mists before the
sun!
And a wounded man approaches;—I'm blind and
cannot see,
Or sure I am that sturdy step, my master's step
should be!'

'I've brought thee back thy banner, wench, from
as rude and red a fray
As e'er was proof of soldier's thew, or theme for
minstrel's lay!
Here, Hubert, bring the silver bowl, and liquor
quantum suff;
I'll make a shift to drain it yet, ere I part with
boots and buff—
Though Guy through many a gaping wound is
breathing forth his life,
And I come to thee a landless man, my fond and
faithful wife.

'Sweet! we will fill our money-bags, and freight
a ship for France,
And mourn in merry Paris for this poor land's
mischance:
For if the worst befall me, why better axe and
rope,

Than life with Lenthall for a king, and Peters for
a pope!
Alas! alas! my gallant Guy!—curse on the crop-
eared boor
That sent me, with my standard, on foot from
Marston Moor!'

W. M. Praed.

THE FORCED RECRUIT

SOLFERINO, 1859

In the ranks of the Austrian you found him,
He died with his face to you all:
Yet bury him here where around him
You honour your bravest that fall.

Venetian, fair-featured and slender,
He lies shot to death in his youth,
With a smile on his lips over-tender
For any mere soldier's dead mouth.

No stranger, and yet not a traitor,
Though alien the cloth on his breast,
Underneath it how seldom a greater
Young heart, has a shot sent to rest!

By your enemy tortured and goaded
To march with them, stand in their file,
His musket (see) never was loaded,
He facing your guns with that smile!

As orphans yearn on to their mothers,
He yearned to your patriot bands;—
'Let me die for our Italy, brothers,
If not in your ranks, by your hands!

'Aim straightly, fire steadily! spare me
A ball in the body which may
Deliver my heart here, and tear me
This badge of the Austrian away!'

So thought he, so died he this morning.
What then? many others have died.
Aye, but easy for men to die scorning
The death-stroke, who fought side by side—

One tricolor floating above them;
Struck down 'mid triumphant acclaims
Of an Italy rescued to love them
And blazon the brass with their names.

But he,—without witness or honour,
Mixed, shamed in his country's regard,
With the tyrants who march in upon her,
Died faithful and passive: 'twas hard.

'Twas sublime. In a cruel restriction
Cut off from the guerdon of sons,
With most filial obedience, conviction,
His soul kissed the lips of her guns.

That moves you? Nay, grudge not to show it,
While digging a grave for him here:
The others who died, says your poet,
Have glory,—let *him* have a tear.

E. B. Browning.

PAUL REVERE'S RIDE

LISTEN, my children, and you shall hear
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,
On the eighteenth of April, in Seventy-five;
Hardly a man is now alive
Who remembers that famous day and year.

He said to his friend, 'If the British march
By land or sea from the town to-night,
Hang a lantern aloft in the belfry arch
Of the North Church tower as a signal light,—
One, if by land, and two, if by sea;
And I on the opposite shore will be,
Ready to ride and spread the alarm
Through every Middlesex village and farm,
For the country folk to be up and to arm.'

Then he said, 'Good night!' and with muffled oar
Silently rowed to the Charlestown shore,
Just as the moon rose over the bay,
Where swinging wide at her moorings lay
The Somerset, British man-of-war;
A phantom ship, with each mast and spar
Across the moon like a prison bar,
And a huge black hulk, that was magnified
By its own reflection in the tide.

Meanwhile, his friend, through alley and street,
Wanders and watches with eager ears,
Till in the silence around him he hears
The muster of men at the barrack door,
The sound of arms, and the tramp of feet,
And the measured tread of the grenadiers,
Marching down to their boats on the shore.

Then he climbed the tower of the Old North
Church,
By the wooden stairs, with stealthy tread,
To the belfry-chamber overhead,
And startled the pigeons from their perch
On the sombre rafters, that round him made
Masses and moving shapes of shade,—
By the trembling ladder, steep and tall,
To the highest window in the wall,
Where he paused to listen and look down
A moment on the roofs of the town,
And the moonlight flowing over all.

Beneath, in the churchyard, lay the dead,
In their night-encampment on the hill,
Wrapped in silence so deep and still
That he could hear, like a sentinel's tread,
The watchful night-wind, as it went
Creeping along from tent to tent,
And seeming to whisper, 'All is well!'
A moment only he feels the spell
Of the place and the hour, and the secret dread
Of the lonely belfry and the dead;
For suddenly all his thoughts are bent
On a shadowy something far away,
Where the river widens to meet the bay,—
A line of black that bends and floats
On the rising tide, like a bridge of boats.

Meanwhile, impatient to mount and ride,
Booted and spurred, with a heavy stride
On the opposite shore walked Paul Revere.
Now he patted his horse's side,
Now gazed at the landscape far and near,
Then, impetuous, stamped the earth,
And turned and tightened his saddle-girth;

But mostly he watched with eager search
The belfry-tower of the Old North Church,
As it rose above the graves on the hill,
Lonely and spectral and sombre and still.
And lo! as he looks, on the belfry's height
A glimmer, and then a gleam of light!
He springs to the saddle, the bridle he turns,
But lingers and gazes, till full on his sight
A second lamp in the belfry burns!

A hurry of hoofs in a village street,
A shape in the moonlight, a bulk in the dark,
And beneath, from the pebbles, in passing, a spark
Struck out by a steed flying fearless and fleet:
That was all! And yet, through the gloom and the light,
The fate of a nation was riding that night;
And the spark struck out by that steed, in his flight,
Kindled the land into flame with its heat.

He has left the village and mounted the steep,
And beneath him, tranquil and broad and deep,
Is the Mystic, meeting the ocean tides;
And under the alders, that skirt its edge,
Now soft on the sand, now loud on the ledge,
Is heard the tramp of his steed as he rides.

It was twelve by the village clock
When he crossed the bridge into Medford town.
He heard the crowing of the cock,
And the barking of the farmer's dog,
And felt the damp of the river fog,
That rises after the sun goes down.

It was one by the village clock,
When he galloped into Lexington.
He saw the gilded weathercock
Swim in the moonlight as he passed,
And the meeting-house windows, blank and bare,
Gaze at him with a spectral glare,
As if they already stood aghast
At the bloody work they would look upon.

It was two by the village clock,
When he came to the bridge in Concord town.
He heard the bleating of the flock,
And the twitter of birds among the trees,
And felt the breath of the morning breeze
Blowing over the meadows brown,
And one was safe and asleep in his bed
Who at the bridge would be first to fall,
Who that day would be lying dead,
Pierced by a British musket-ball.

You know the rest. In the books you have read
How the British Regulars fired and fled,—
How the farmers gave them ball for ball
From behind each fence and farmyard wall,
Chasing the red-coats down the lane,
Then crossing the fields to emerge again
Under the trees at the turn of the road,
And only pausing to fire and load.

So through the night rode Paul Revere;
And so through the night went his cry of alarm
To every Middlesex village and farm,—
A cry of defiance and not of fear,
A voice in the darkness, a knock at the door,
And a word that shall echo for evermore!

For, borne on a night-wind of the Past,
Through all our history, to the last,
In the hour of darkness and peril and need,
The people will waken and listen to hear
The hurrying hoof-beats of that steed,
And the midnight message of Paul Revere.

H. W. LONGFELLOW.

THE CUMBERLAND

At anchor in Hampton Roads we lay,
On board of the Cumberland, sloop-of-war;
And at times from the fortress across the bay
The alarum of drums swept past,
Or a bugle blast
From the camp on the shore.

Then far away to the south uprose
A little feather of snow-white smoke,
And we knew that the iron ship of our foes
Was steadily steering its course
To try the force
Of our ribs of oak.

Down upon us heavily runs,
Silent and sullen, the floating fort;
Then comes a puff of smoke from her guns,
And leaps the terrible death,
With fiery breath,
From each open port.

We are not idle, but send her straight
Defiance back in a full broadside!
As hail rebounds from a roof of slate,

Rebounds our heavier hail
From each iron scale
Of the monster's hide.

'Strike your flag!' the rebel cries,
In his arrogant old plantation strain,
'Never!' our gallant Morris replies;
'It is better to sink than to yield!'
And the whole air pealed
With the cheers of our men.

Then, like a kraken huge and black,
She crushed our ribs in her iron grasp!
Down went the Cumberland all a wrack,
With a sudden shudder of death,
And the cannon's breath
For her dying gasp.

Next morn, as the sun rose over the bay,
Still floated our flag at the mainmast head.
Lord, how beautiful was Thy day!
Every waft of the air
Was a whisper of prayer,
Or a dirge for the dead.

Ho! brave hearts that went down in the seas!
Ye are at peace in the troubled stream;
Ho! brave land! with hearts like these,
Thy flag, that is rent in twain,
Shall be one again,
And without a seam!

H. W. Longfellow.

THE PIPES AT LUCKNOW

AN INCIDENT OF THE SEPOY MUTINY

Pipes of the misty moorlands,
  Voice of the glens and hills;
The droning of the torrents,
  The treble of the rills!
Not the braes of broom and heather,
  Nor the mountains dark with rain,
Nor maiden bower, nor border tower,
  Have heard your sweetest strain!

Dear to the Lowland reaper,
  And plaided mountaineer,—
To the cottage and the castle
  The Scottish pipes are dear;—
Sweet sounds the ancient pibroch
  O'er mountain, loch, and glade;
But the sweetest of all music
  The pipes at Lucknow played.

Day by day the Indian tiger
  Louder yelled, and nearer crept;
Round and round the jungle-serpent
  Near and nearer circles swept.
'Pray for rescue, wives and mothers,—
  Pray to-day!' the soldier said;
'To-morrow, death 's between us
  And the wrong and shame we dread.'

Oh, they listened, looked, and waited,
  Till their hope became despair;
And the sobs of low bewailing
  Filled the pauses of their prayer.

Then up spake a Scottish maiden,
With her ear unto the ground:
'Dinna ye hear it?—dinna ye hear it?
The pipes o' Havelock sound!'

Hushed the wounded man his groaning;
Hushed the wife her little ones;
Alone they heard the drum-roll
And the roar of Sepoy guns.
But to sounds of home and childhood
The Highland ear was true;—
As her mother's cradle-crooning
The mountain pipes she knew.

Like the march of soundless music
Through the vision of the seer,
More of feeling than of hearing,
Of the heart than of the ear,
She knew the droning pibroch,
She knew the Campbell's call:
'Hark! hear ye no' MacGregor's,
The grandest o' them all!'

Oh, they listened, dumb and breathless,
And they caught the sound at last;
Faint and far beyond the Goomtee
Rose and fell the piper's blast!
Then a burst of wild thanksgiving
Mingled woman's voice and man's;
'God be praised!—the march of Havelock!
The piping of the clans!'

Louder, nearer, fierce as vengeance,
Sharp and shrill as swords at strife,
Came the wild MacGregor's clan-call,
Stinging all the air to life.

But when the far-off dust-cloud
To plaided legions grew,
Full tenderly and blithesomely
The pipes of rescue blew!

Round the silver domes of Lucknow,
Moslem mosque and Pagan shrine,
Breathed the air to Britons dearest,
The air of Auld Lang Syne.
O'er the cruel roll of war-drums
Rose that sweet and homelike strain;
And the tartan clove the turban,
As the Goomtee cleaves the plain.

Dear to the corn-land reaper
And plaided mountaineer,—
To the cottage and the castle
The piper's song is dear.
Sweet sounds the Gaelic pibroch
O'er mountain, glen, and glade;
But the sweetest of all music
The Pipes at Lucknow played!

J. G. Whittier.

BARBARA FRIETCHIE

Up from the meadows rich with corn,
Clear in the cool September morn,

The clustered spires of Frederick stand
Green-walled by the hills of Maryland.

Round about them orchards sweep,
Apple and peach tree fruited deep,

Fair as the garden of the Lord
To the eyes of the famished rebel horde,

On that pleasant morn of the early fall
When Lee marched over the mountain-wall;

Over the mountains winding down,
Horse and foot, into Frederick town.

Forty flags with their silver stars,
Forty flags with their crimson bars,

Flapped in the morning wind: the sun
Of noon looked down, and saw not one.

Up rose old Barbara Frietchie then,
Bowed with her fourscore years and ten;

Bravest of all in Frederick town,
She took up the flag the men hauled down;

In her attic window the staff she set,
To show that one heart was loyal yet.

Up the street came the rebel tread,
Stonewall Jackson riding ahead.

Under his slouched hat left and right
He glanced; the old flag met his sight.

'Halt!'—the dust-brown ranks stood fast.
'Fire!'—out blazed the rifle-blast.

It shivered the window, pane and sash;
It rent the banner with seam and gash.

Quick, as it fell, from the broken staff
Dame Barbara snatched the silken scarf.

She leaned far out on the window-sill,
And shook it forth with a royal will.

'Shoot, if you must, this old gray head,
But spare your country's flag,' she said.

A shade of sadness, a blush of shame,
Over the face of the leader came;

The nobler nature within him stirred
To life at that woman's deed and word;

'Who touches a hair of yon gray head
Dies like a dog! March on!' he said.

All day long through Frederick street
Sounded the tread of marching feet:

All day long that free flag tost
Over the heads of the rebel host.

Ever its torn folds rose and fell
On the loyal winds that loved it well;

And through the hill-gaps sunset light
Shone over it with a warm good-night.

Barbara Frietchie's work is o'er,
And the Rebel rides on his raids no more.

Honour to her! and let a tear
Fall, for her sake, on Stonewall's bier.

Over Barbara Frietchie's grave,
Flag of Freedom and Union, wave!

Peace and order and beauty draw
Round thy symbol of light and law;

And ever the stars above look down
On thy stars below in Frederick town!

J. G. Whittier.

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE

HALF a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.
'Forward, the Light Brigade!
Charge for the guns!' he said;
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

'Forward, the Light Brigade!'
Was there a man dismay'd?
Not tho' the soldier knew
Some one had blunder'd:
Their's not to make reply,
Their's not to reason why,
Their's but to do and die:
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
Volley'd and thunder'd;
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of Hell
Rode the six hundred.

Flash'd all their sabres bare,
Flash'd as they turn'd in air,
Sabring the gunners there,

Charging an army, while
All the world wonder'd :
Plunged in the battery-smoke
Right thro' the line they broke ;
Cossack and Russian
Reel'd from the sabre-stroke
Shatter'd and sunder'd.
Then they rode back, but not,
Not the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them
Volley'd and thunder'd ;
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell,
They that had fought so well
Came thro' the jaws of Death
Back from the mouth of Hell,
All that was left of them,
Left of six hundred.

When can their glory fade ?
O the wild charge they made !
All the world wonder'd.
Honour the charge they made !
Honour the Light Brigade,
Noble six hundred !

LORD TENNYSON.

THE DEAD WARRIOR

HOME they brought her warrior dead:
She nor swoon'd, nor utter'd cry:
All her maidens, watching, said,
'She must weep or she will die.'

Then they praised him, soft and low,
Call'd him worthy to be loved,
Truest friend and noblest foe;
Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

Stole a maiden from her place,
Lightly to the warrior stept,
Took the face-cloth from the face;
Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,
Set his child upon her knee—
Like summer tempest came her tears—
'Sweet my child, I live for thee.'

LORD TENNYSON.

THE RETURN OF THE GUARDS

(July 9, 1856)

YES, they return—but who return?
The many or the few?
Clothed with a name, in vain the same,
Face after face is new.

We know how beat the drum to muster,
We heard the cheers of late,
As that red storm, in haste to form,
Burst through each barrack-gate.

The first proud mass of English manhood,
A very sea of life,
With strength untold, was Eastward rolled—
How ebbs it back from strife?

The steps that scaled the heights of Alma
Wake but faint echoes here;
The flags we sent come back, though rent,
For other hands to rear.

Through shouts, that hail the shattered banner
Home from proud onsets led,
Through the glad roar, which greets once more
Each bronzed and bearded head,

Hushed voices, from the earth beneath us,
Thrill on the summer air,
And claim a part of England's heart
For those who are not there.

Not only these have marched from battle
Into the realms of peace—
A home attained—a haven gained,
Where wars and tumults cease.

Whilst thick on Alma's blood-stained river
The war-smoke lingered still,
A long, low beat of unseen feet
Rose from her vine-clad hill;

By a swift change, to music, nobler
Than e'er was heard by man,
From those red banks the gathered ranks
That other march began.

On, on, through wild and wondrous regions
Echoed their iron tread,
Whilst voices old before them rolled—
'Make way for Alma's dead.'

Like mighty winds before them ever,
Those ancient voices rolled;
Swept from their track, huge bars run back,
And giant gates unfold;

Till, to the inmost home of heroes,
They led that hero line,
Where with a flame no years can tame
The stars of honour shine.

As forward stepped each fearless soldier,
So stately, firm, and tall,
Wide, wide outflung, grim plaudits rung
On through that endless hall.

Next, upon gloomy phantom chargers,
The self-devoted came,
Who rushed to die, without reply,
For duty, not for fame.

Then, from their place of ancient glory,
All sheathed in shining brass,
Three hundred men, of the Grecian glen,
Marched down to see them pass.

And the long silent flutes of Sparta
Poured haughty welcome forth,
Stern hymns to crown, with just renown,
Her brethren of the North.

Yet louder at the solemn portal,
The trumpet floats and waits;
And still more wide, in living pride,
Fly back the golden gates.

And those from Inkerman swarm onwards,
Who made the dark fight good—
One man to nine, till their thin line
Lay, where at first it stood.

But though cheered high by mailèd millions
Their steps were faint and slow,
In each proud face the eye might trace
A sign of coming woe.

A coming woe which deepened ever,
As down that darkening road,
Our brâvest tossed to plague and frost,
In streams of ruin flowed.

All through that dim despairing winter,
Too noble to complain,
Bands hunger-worn, in raiment torn,
Came, not by foemen slain.

And patient, from the sullen trenches
Crowds sunk, by toil and cold—
Then murmurs slow, like thunders low,
Wailed through the brave of old.

Wrath glided o'er the Hall of Heroes,
Anguish, and shame, and scorn,
As clouds that drift, breathe darkness swift
O'er seas of shining corn.

Wrath glided o'er the Hall of Heroes,
And veiled it like a pall,
Whilst all felt fear, lest they should hear
The Lion-banner fall.

And if unstained that ancient banner
Keep yet its place of pride,
Let none forget how vast the debt
We owe to those who died.

Let none forget THE OTHERS, marching
With steps we feel no more,
Whose bodies sleep, by that grim deep
Which shakes the Euxine shore.

SIR FRANCIS H. DOYLE.

THE RED THREAD OF HONOUR

ELEVEN men of England
A breastwork charged in vain;
Eleven men of England
Lie stripped, and gashed, and slain.
Slain, but of foes that guarded
Their rock-built fortress well,
Some twenty had been mastered,
When the last soldier fell.

Whilst Napier piloted his wondrous way
Across the sand-waves of the desert sea,
Then flashed at once, on each fierce clan, dismay,
Lord of their wild Truckee,

These missed the glen to which their steps were bent,
Mistook a mandate, from afar half-heard,
And, in that glorious error, calmly went
To death without a word.

The robber-chief mused deeply,
Above those daring dead;
'Bring here,' at length he shouted,
'Bring quick, the battle thread.
Let Eblis blast for ever
Their souls, if Allah will:
But WE must keep unbroken
The old rules of the Hill.

'Before the Ghiznee tiger
Leapt forth to burn and slay;
Before the holy Prophet
Taught our grim tribes to pray;

Before Secunder's lances
  Pierced through each Indian glen;
The mountain laws of honour
  Were framed for fearless men.

'Still, when a chief dies bravely,
  We bind with green *one* wrist—
Green for the brave, for heroes
  One crimson thread we twist.
Say ye, oh gallant hillmen,
  For these, whose life has fled,
Which is the fitting colour,
  The green one or the red?'

'Our brethren, laid in honoured graves, may wear
  Their green reward,' each noble savage said:
'To these, whom hawks and hungry wolves shall tear,
  Who dares deny the red?'

Thus conquering hate, and steadfast to the right,
  Fresh from the heart that haughty verdict came;
Beneath a waning moon, each spectral height
  Rolled back its loud acclaim.

Once more the chief gazed keenly
  Down on those daring dead;
From his good sword their heart's blood
  Crept to that crimson thread.
Once more he cried, 'The judgement,
  Good friends, is wise and true,
But though the red *be* given,
  Have we not more to do?

'These were not stirred by anger,
  Nor yet by lust made bold;
Renown they thought above them,
  Nor did they look for gold.

To them their leader's signal
  Was as the voice of God:
Unmoved and uncomplaining,
  The path it showed they trod.

'As, without sound or struggle,
  The stars unhurrying march,
Where Allah's finger guides them,
  Through yonder purple arch,
These Franks, sublimely silent,
  Without a quickened breath,
Went, in the strength of duty,
  Straight to their goal of death.

'If I were now to ask you
  To name our bravest man,
Ye all at once would answer,
  They called him Mehrab Khan.
He sleeps among his fathers,
  Dear to our native land,
With the bright mark he bled for
  Firm round his faithful hand.

'The songs they sing of Roostum
  Fill all the past with light;
If truth be in their music,
  He was a noble knight.
But were those heroes living,
  And strong for battle still,
Would Mehrab Khan or Roostum
  Have climbed, like these, the Hill?'

And they replied, 'Though Mehrab Khan was brave,
  As chief, he chose himself what risks to run;
Prince Roostum lied, his forfeit life to save,
  Which these had never done.'

'Enough!' he shouted fiercely;
'Doomed though they be to hell,
Bind fast the crimson trophy
Round BOTH wrists—bind it well.
Who knows but that great Allah
May grudge such matchless men,
With none so decked in heaven,
To the fiends' flaming den?'

Then all those gallant robbers
Shouted a stern 'Amen!'
They raised the slaughtered sergeant.
They raised his mangled ten.
And when we found their bodies
Left bleaching in the wind,
Around BOTH wrists in glory
That crimson thread was twined.

Then Napier's knightly heart, touched to the core,
Rung, like an echo, to that knightly deed,
He bade its memory live for evermore,
That those who run may read.

SIR FRANCIS H. DOYLE.

THE PRIVATE OF THE BUFFS

LAST night, among his fellow roughs,
He jested, quaffed, and swore;
A drunken private of the Buffs,
Who never looked before.
To-day, beneath the foeman's frown,
He stands in Elgin's place,
Ambassador from Britain's crown
And type of all her race.

Poor, reckless, rude, low-born, untaught,
Bewildered, and alone,
A heart, with English instinct fraught,
He yet can call his own.
Ay, tear his body limb from limb,
Bring cord, or axe, or flame,
He only knows, that not through *him*
Shall England come to shame.

Far Kentish hop-fields round him seemed,
Like dreams, to come and go;
Bright leagues of cherry-blossom gleamed,
One sheet of living snow;
The smoke, above his father's door,
In gray soft eddyings hung:
Must he then watch it rise no more,
Doomed by himself, so young?

Yes, honour calls!—with strength like steel
He put the vision by.
Let dusky Indians whine and kneel;
An English lad must die.
And thus, with eyes that would not shrink,
With knee to man unbent,
Unfaltering on its dreadful brink,
To his red grave he went.

Vain, mightiest fleets of iron framed;
Vain, those all-shattering guns;
Unless proud England keep, untamed,
The strong heart of her sons.
So, let his name through Europe ring—
A man of mean estate,
Who died, as firm as Sparta's king,
Because his soul was great.

SIR FRANCIS H. DOYLE.

INCIDENT OF THE FRENCH CAMP

You know, we French stormed Ratisbon :
A mile or so away
On a little mound, Napoleon
Stood on our storming-day ;
With neck out-thrust, you fancy how,
Legs wide, arms locked behind,
As if to balance the prone brow
Oppressive with its mind.

Just as perhaps he mused ' My plans
That soar, to earth may fall,
Let once my army-leader Lannes
Waver at yonder wall,'—
Out 'twixt the battery-smokes there flew
A rider, bound on bound
Full-galloping ; nor bridle drew
Until he reached the mound.

Then off there flung in smiling joy,
And held himself erect
By just his horse's mane, a boy :
You hardly could suspect—
(So tight he kept his lips compressed,
Scarce any blood came through)
You looked twice ere you saw his breast
Was all but shot in two.

' Well,' cried he, ' Emperor, by God's grace
We've got you Ratisbon !
The Marshal 's in the market-place
And you'll be there anon

To see your flag-bird flap his vans
Where I, to heart's desire,
Perched him!' The Chief's eye flashed; his plans
Soared up again like fire.

The Chief's eye flashed; but presently
Softened itself, as sheathes
A film the mother-eagle's eye
When her bruised eaglet breathes:
'You're wounded!' 'Nay,' his soldier's pride
Touched to the quick, he said:
'I'm killed, Sire!' And his Chief beside,
Smiling the boy fell dead.

ROBERT BROWNING.

KILLIECRANKIE

On the heights of Killiecrankie
Yester-morn our army lay:
Slowly rose the mist in columns
From the river's broken way;
Hoarsely roared the swollen torrent,
And the Pass was wrapt in gloom,
When the clansmen rose together
From their lair amidst the broom.
Then we belted on our tartans,
And our bonnets down we drew,
And we felt our broadswords' edges,
And we proved them to be true;
And we prayed the prayer of soldiers,
And we cried the gathering-cry,
And we clasped the hands of kinsmen,
And we swore to do or die!

Then our leader rode before us
On his war-horse black as night—
Well the Cameronian rebels
Knew that charger in the fight!—
And a cry of exultation
From the bearded warriors rose;
For we loved the house of Claver'se,
And we thought of good Montrose.
But he raised his hand for silence—
'Soldiers! I have sworn a vow:
Ere the evening star shall glisten
On Schehallion's lofty brow,
Either we shall rest in triumph,
Or another of the Graemes
Shall have died in battle-harness
For his country and King James!
Think upon the Royal Martyr—
Think of what his race endure—
Think of him whom butchers murdered
On the field of Magus Muir:—
By his sacred blood I charge ye,
By the ruined hearth and shrine—
By the blighted hopes of Scotland,
By your injuries and mine—
Strike this day as if the anvil
Lay beneath your blows the while,
Be they covenanting traitors,
Or the brood of false Argyle!
Strike! and drive the trembling rebels
Backward o'er the stormy Forth;
Let them tell their pale Convention
How they fared within the North.
Let them tell that Highland honour
Is not to be bought nor sold,
That we scorn their prince's anger
As we loathe his foreign gold.

Strike! and when the fight is over,
If ye look in vain for me,
Where the dead are lying thickest,
Search for him that was Dundee!'

Loudly then the hills re-echoed
With our answer to his call,
But a deeper echo sounded
In the bosoms of us all.
For the lands of wide Breadalbane,
Not a man who heard him speak
Would that day have left the battle.
Burning eye and flushing cheek
Told the clansmen's fierce emotion,
And they harder drew their breath;
For their souls were strong within them,
Stronger than the grasp of death.
Soon we heard a challenge-trumpet
Sounding in the Pass below,
And the distant tramp of horses,
And the voices of the foe:
Down we crouched amid the bracken,
Till the Lowland ranks drew near,
Panting like the hounds in summer,
When they scent the stately deer.
From the dark defile emerging,
Next we saw the squadrons come,
Leslie's foot and Leven's troopers
Marching to the tuck of drum;
Through the scattered wood of birches,
O'er the broken ground and heath,
Wound the long battalion slowly,
Till they gained the plain beneath;
Then we bounded from our covert.—
Judge how looked the Saxons then,

When they saw the rugged mountain
  Start to life with armèd men!
Like a tempest down the ridges
  Swept the hurricane of steel,
Rose the slogan of Macdonald—
  Flashed the broadsword of Lochiel!
Vainly sped the withering volley
  'Mongst the foremost of our band—
On we poured until we met them,
  Foot to foot, and hand to hand.
Horse and man went down like drift-wood
  When the floods are black at Yule,
And their carcasses are whirling
  In the Garry's deepest pool.
Horse and man went down before us—
  Living foe there tarried none
On the field of Killiecrankie,
  When that stubborn fight was done!

And the evening star was shining
  On Schehallion's distant head,
When we wiped our bloody broadswords,
  And returned to count the dead.
There we found him gashed and gory,
  Stretched upon the cumbered plain,
As he told us where to seek him,
  In the thickest of the slain.
And a smile was on his visage,
  For within his dying ear
Pealed the joyful note of triumph,
  And the clansmen's clamorous cheer:
So, amidst the battle's thunder,
  Shot, and steel, and scorching flame,
In the glory of his manhood
  Passed the spirit of the Graeme!

W. E. Aytoun.

PESCHIERA

What voice did on my spirit fall,
Peschiera, when thy bridge I crost?
'"'Tis better to have fought and lost,
Than never to have fought at all.'

The tricolour—a trampled rag
Lies, dirt and dust; the lines I track
By sentry boxes yellow-black,
Lead up to no Italian flag.

I see the Croat soldier stand
Upon the grass of your redoubts;
The eagle with his black wing flouts
The breadth and beauty of your land.

Yet not in vain, although in vain,
O men of Brescia, on the day
Of loss past hope, I heard you say
Your welcome to the noble pain.

You said, 'Since so it is,—good bye
Sweet life, high hope; but whatsoe'er
May be, or must, no tongue shall dare
To tell, "The Lombard feared to die!"'

You said (there shall be answer fit),
'And if our children must obey,
They must; but thinking on this day
'Twill less debase them to submit.'

You said (Oh, not in vain you said),
'Haste, brothers, haste, while yet we may;
The hours ebb fast of this one day
When blood may yet be nobly shed.'

Ah! not for idle hatred, not
For honour, fame, nor self-applause,
But for the glory of the cause,
You did, what will not be forgot.

And though the stranger stand, 'tis true,
By force and fortune's right he stands;
By fortune, which is in God's hands,
And strength, which yet shall spring in you.

This voice did on my spirit fall,
Peschiera, when thy bridge I crost,
'"Tis better to have fought and lost,
Than never to have fought at all.'

A. H. Clough.

THE KNIGHT'S LEAP AT ALTENAHR

'So the foeman has fired the gate, men of mine,
And the water is spent and done;
Then bring me a cup of the red Ahr-wine;
I never shall drink but this one.

'And fetch me my harness, and saddle my horse,
And lead him me round to the door;
He must take such a leap to-night perforce
As horse never took before.

'I have lived by the saddle for years a score,
And if I must die on tree,
The old saddle tree, which has borne me of yore,
Is the properest timber for me.

'I have lived my life, I have fought my fight,
I have drunk my share of wine;
From Trier to Cöln there was never a knight
Lived a merrier life than mine.

'So now to show bishop, and burgher, and priest
How the Altenahr hawk can die.
If they smoke the old falcon out of his nest,
He must take to his wings and fly.'

He harnest himself by the clear moonshine,
And he mounted his horse at the door,
And he took such a pull at the red Ahr-wine
As never man took before.

He spurred the old horse, and he held him tight,
And he leapt him out over the wall;
Out over the cliff, out into the night,
Three hundred feet of fall.

They found him next morning below in the glen,
And never a bone in him whole:
But heaven may yet have more mercy than men
On such a bold rider's soul.

CHARLES KINGSLEY.

A MARCH

DREARY East winds howling o'er us;
Clay-lands knee-deep spread before us;
Mire and ice and snow and sleet;
Aching backs and frozen feet;
Knees which reel as marches quicken,
Ranks which thin as corpses thicken;
While with carrion birds we eat,
Calling puddle-water sweet,
As we pledge the health of our general, who fares as rough as we:
What can daunt us, what can turn us, led to death by such as he?

CHARLES KINGSLEY.

BEAT! BEAT! DRUMS!

Beat! beat! drums!—blow! bugles! blow!
Through the windows—through doors—burst like a force of ruthless men,
Into the solemn church, and scatter the congregation,
Into the school where the scholar is studying;
Leave not the bridegroom quiet—no happiness must he have now with his bride,
Nor the peaceful farmer any peace, ploughing his field or gathering his grain,
So fierce you whirr and pound, you drums—so shrill you bugles blow.

Beat! beat! drums!—blow! bugles! blow!
Over the traffic of cities—over the rumble of wheels in the streets;
Are beds prepared for sleepers at night in the houses? No sleepers must sleep in those beds;
No bargainers' bargains by day—no brokers or speculators—Would they continue?
Would the talkers be talking? would the singer attempt to sing?
Would the lawyer rise in the court to state his case before the judge?
Then rattle quicker, heavier, drums—you bugles, wilder blow.

Beat! beat! drums!—blow! bugles! blow!
Make no parley—stop for no expostulation;
Mind not the timid—mind not the weeper or prayer,
Mind not the old man beseeching the young man,
Let not the child's voice be heard, nor the mother's entreaties,

Make even the trestles to shake the dead where they
lie awaiting the hearses,
So strong you thump, O terrible drums—so loud you
bugles blow.

WALT WHITMAN.

A SIGHT IN CAMP IN THE DAYBREAK GREY AND DIM

A SIGHT in camp in the daybreak grey and dim.
As from my tent I emerge so early, sleepless,
As slow I walk in the cool fresh air the path near by
the hospital tent,
Three forms I see on stretchers lying, brought out
there, untended lying,
Over each the blanket spread, ample brownish
woollen blanket,
Grey and heavy blanket, folding, covering all.

Curious, I halt, and silent stand,
Then with light fingers I from the face of the nearest,
the first, just lift the blanket;
Who are you, elderly man so gaunt and grim, with well-
grey'd hair, and flesh all sunken about the eyes?
Who are you, my dear comrade?

Then to the second I step—and who are you, my
child and darling?
Who are you, sweet boy, with cheeks yet blooming?

Then to the third—a face nor child nor old, very
calm, as of beautiful yellow-white ivory;
Young man, I think I know you—I think this face of
yours is the face of the Christ Himself;
Dead and divine and brother of all, and here again
he lies.

WALT WHITMAN.

THE ARTILLERYMAN'S VISION

While my wife at my side lies slumbering, and the wars are over long,
And my head on the pillow rests at home, and the vacant midnight passes,
And through the stillness, through the dark, I hear, just hear, the breath of my infant,
There in the room, as I wake from sleep, this vision presses upon me:
The engagement opens there and then in fantasy unreal,
The skirmishers begin, they crawl cautiously ahead, I hear the irregular snap! snap!
I hear the sounds of the different missiles, the short *t-h-t! t-h-t!* of the rifle balls,
I see the shells exploding, leaving small white clouds, I hear the great shells shrieking as they pass,
The grape like the hum and whirr of wind through the trees (tumultuous now the contest rages),
All the scenes at the batteries rise in detail before me again,
The crashing and smoking, the pride of the men in their pieces,
The chief-gunner ranges and sights his piece and selects a fuse of the right time,
After firing I see him lean aside and look eagerly off to note the effect;
Elsewhere I hear the cry of a regiment charging (the young colonel leads himself this time with brandish'd sword),
I see the gaps cut by the enemy's volleys (quickly fill'd up, no delay),
I breathe the suffocating smoke, then the flat clouds hover low concealing all;

Now a strange lull for a few seconds, not a shot fired
on either side;
Then resumed, the chaos louder than ever, with
eager calls and orders of officers,
While from some distant part of the field the wind
wafts to my ears a shout of applause (some
special success),
And ever the sound of the cannon far or near
(rousing, even in dreams, a devilish exultation
and all the old mad joy in the depths of my
soul),
And ever the hastening of infantry shifting positions—
batteries, cavalry, moving hither and thither
(The falling, dying, I heed not—the wounded, dripping
and red, I heed not—some to the rear are
hobbling);
Grime, heat, rush, aides-de-camp galloping by or on
a full run,
With the patter of small arms, the warning *s-s-t* of
the rifles (these in my vision I hear or see),
And bombs bursting in air, and at night the vari-
colour'd rockets.

WALT WHITMAN.

AS TOILSOME I WANDER'D VIRGINIA'S WOODS

As toilsome I wander'd Virginia's woods,
To the music of rustling leaves kick'd by my feet
(for 'twas autumn),
I mark'd at the foot of a tree the grave of a
soldier;
Mortally wounded he and buried on the retreat
(easily all could I understand),

The halt of a midday hour, when up! no time to lose—yet this sign left,
On a tablet scrawl'd and nail'd on the tree by the grave,
Bold, cautious, true, and my loving comrade.

Long, long I muse, then on my way go wandering.
Many a changeful season to follow, and many a scene of life,
Yet at times through changeful season and scene, abrupt—alone, or in the crowded street—
Comes before me the unknown soldier's grave, comes the inscription rude in Virginia's woods.
Bold, cautious, true, and my loving comrade.

WALT WHITMAN.

A BALLAD FOR A BOY

WHEN George the Third was reigning a hundred years ago,
He ordered Captain Farmer to chase the foreign foe.
'You're not afraid of shot,' said he, 'you're not afraid of wreck,
So cruise about the west of France in the frigate called *Quebec*.

Quebec was once a Frenchman's town, but twenty years ago
King George the Second sent a man called General Wolfe, you know,
To clamber up a precipice and look into Quebec,
As you'd look down a hatchway when standing on the deck.

If Wolfe could beat the Frenchmen then so you can
beat them now.
Before he got inside the town he died, I must allow.
But since the town was won for us it is a lucky name,
And you'll remember Wolfe's good work, and you
shall do the same.'

Then Farmer said, ' I'll try, sir ', and Farmer bowed
so low
That George could see his pigtail tied in a velvet bow.
George gave him his commission, and that it might
be safer,
Signed ' King of Britain, King of France ', and
sealed it with a wafer.

Then proud was Captain Farmer in a frigate of his
own,
And grander on his quarter-deck than George upon
the throne.
He 'd two guns in his cabin, and on the spar-deck ten,
And twenty on the gun-deck, and more than ten
score men.

And as a huntsman scours the brakes with sixteen
brace of dogs,
With two-and-thirty cannon the ship explored the
fogs.
From Cape la Hogue to Ushant, from Rochefort to
Belleisle,
She hunted game till reef and mud were rubbing on
her keel.

The fogs are dried, the frigate's side is bright with
melting tar,
The lad up in the foretop sees square white sails
afar ;

The east wind drives three square-sailed masts from
out the Breton bay,
And ' Clear for action ! ' Farmer shouts, and reefers
yell ' Hooray ! '

The Frenchmen's captain had a name I wish I could
pronounce ;
A Breton gentleman was he, and wholly free from
bounce,
One like those famous fellows who died by guillotine
For honour and the fleurs-de-lys and Antoinette the
Queen.

The Catholic for Louis, the Protestant for George,
Each captain drew as bright a sword as saintly
smiths could forge ;
And both were simple seamen, but both could
understand
How each was bound to win or die for flag and
native land.

The French ship was *La Surveillante*, which means
the watchful maid ;
She folded up her head-dress and began to cannonade.
Her hull was clean, and ours was foul ; we had to
spread more sail.
On canvas, stays, and topsail yards her bullets came
like hail.

Sore smitten were both captains, and many lads
beside,
And still to cut our rigging the foreign gunners tried.
A sail-clad spar came flapping down athwart a
blazing gun ;
We could not quench the rushing flames, and so the
Frenchman won.

Our quarter-deck was crowded, the waist was all aglow;
Men hung upon the taffrail, half scorched but loth to go;
Our captain sat where once he stood, and would not quit his chair.
He bade his comrades leap for life, and leave him bleeding there.

The guns were hushed on either side, the Frenchmen lowered boats,
They flung us planks and hencoops, and everything that floats.
They risked their lives, good fellows! to bring their rivals aid.
'Twas by the conflagration the peace was strangely made.

La Surveillante was like a sieve; the victors had no rest.
They had to dodge the east wind to reach the port of Brest,
And where the waves leapt lower, and the riddled ship went slower,
In triumph, yet in funeral guise, came fisher-boats to tow her.

They dealt with us as brethren, they mourned for Farmer dead;
And as the wounded captives passed each Breton bowed the head.
Then spoke the French lieutenant, 'Twas fire that won, not we.
You never struck your flag to us; you'll go to England free.'

'Twas the sixth day of October, seventeen hundred seventy-nine,
A year when nations ventured against us to combine,
Quebec was burnt and Farmer slain, by us remembered not;
But thanks be to the French book wherein they're not forgot.

Now you, if you've to fight the French, my youngster, bear in mind
Those seamen of King Louis so chivalrous and kind;
Think of the Breton gentlemen who took our lads to Brest,
And treat some rescued Breton as a comrade and a guest.

WILLIAM CORY.

CREÇY

AT Creçy by Somme in Ponthieu
High up on a windy hill
A mill stands out like a tower;
King Edward stands on the mill.
The plain is seething below
As Vesuvius seethes with flame,
But O! not with fire, but gore,
Earth incarnadined o'er,
Crimson with shame and with fame:—
To the King run the messengers, crying
'Thy Son is hard-press'd to the dying!'
—'Let alone: for to-day will be written in story
To the great world's end, and for ever:
So let the boy have the glory.'

Erin and Gwalia there
With England are rank'd against France;
Outfacing the oriflamme red
The red dragons of Merlin advance:—
As a harvest in autumn renew'd
The lances bend o'er the fields;
Snow-thick our arrow-heads white
Level the foe as they light;
Knighthood to yeomanry yields:—
Proud heart, the King watches, as higher
Goes the blaze of the battle, and nigher:—
'To-day is a day will be written in story
To the great world's end, and for ever!
Let the boy alone have the glory.'

Harold at Senlac-on-Sea
By Norman arrow laid low,—
When the shield-wall was breach'd by the shaft,
—Thou art avenged by the bow!
Chivalry! name of romance!
Thou art henceforth but a name!
Weapon that none can withstand,
Yew in the Englishman's hand,
Flight-shaft unerring in aim!
As a lightning-struck forest the foemen
Shiver down to the stroke of the bowmen:—
—'O to-day is a day will be written in story
To the great world's end, and for ever!
So, let the boy have the glory.'

Pride of Liguria's shore
Genoa wrestles in vain;
Vainly Bohemia's King
Kinglike is laid with the slain.
The Blood-lake is wiped out in blood,
The shame of the centuries o'er;

Where the pride of the Norman had sway
The lions lord over the fray,
The legions of France are no more :—
—The Prince to his father kneels lowly ;
—'His is the battle ! his wholly !
For to-day is a day will be written in story
To the great world's end, and for ever :—
So, let him have the spurs, and the glory ! '

F. T. PALGRAVE.

TRAFALGAR

HEARD ye the thunder of battle
Low in the South and afar ?
Saw ye the flash of the death-cloud
Crimson on Trafalgar ?

Such another day never
England will look on again,
When the battle fought was the hottest,
And the hero of heroes was slain !
For the fleet of France and the force of Spain were gather'd for fight,
A greater than Philip their lord, a new Armada in might :—
And the sails were aloft once more in the deep Gaditanian bay,
Where *Redoubtable* and *Bucentaure* and great *Trinidada* lay ;
Eager-reluctant to close ; for across the bloodshed to be
Two navies beheld one prize in its glory,—the throne of the sea !

Which were bravest, who should tell ? for both were
gallant and true ;
But the greatest seaman was ours, of all that sail'd
o'er the blue.

From Cadiz the enemy sallied : they knew not
Nelson was there ;
His name a navy to us, but to them a flag of despair.
From Ayamonte to Algeziras he guarded the coast,
Till he bore from Tavira south ; and they now must
fight, or be lost ;—
Vainly they steer'd for the Rock and the Midland
sheltering sea,
For he headed the Admirals round, constraining
them under his lee,
Villeneuve of France, and Gravina of Spain : so they
shifted their ground,
They could choose,—they were more than we ;—and
they faced at Trafalgar round ;
Banking their fleet two deep, a fortress-wall thirty-
tower'd ;
In the midst, four-storied with guns, the dark
Trinidada lower'd.

So with those.—But meanwhile, as against some
dyke that men massively rear,
From on high the torrent surges, to drive through
the dyke as a spear,
Eagle-eyed e'en in his blindness, our chief sets his
double array,
Making the fleet two spears, to thrust at the foe,
any way, . . .
' Anyhow !—without orders, each captain his
Frenchman may grapple perforce :
Collingwood first ' (yet the *Victory* ne'er a whit
slacken'd her course).

'Signal for action! Farewell! we shall win, but we meet not again!'
—Then a low thunder of readiness ran from the decks o'er the main,
And on,—as the message from masthead to masthead flew out like a flame,
ENGLAND EXPECTS EVERY MAN WILL DO HIS DUTY —they came.

—Silent they come:—While the thirty black forts of the foemen's array
Clothe them in billowy snow, tier speaking o'er tier as they lay;
Flashes that came and went, as swords when the battle is rife;—
But ours stood frowningly smiling, and ready for death as for life.

—O in that interval grim, ere the furies of slaughter embrace,
Thrills o'er each man some far echo of England; some glance of some face!
—Faces gazing seaward through tears from the ocean-girt shore;
Features that ne'er can be gazed on again till the death-pang is o'er. . . .
Lone in his cabin the Admiral kneeling, and all his great heart
As a child's to the mother, goes forth to the loved one, who bade him depart
. . . O not for death, but glory! her smile would welcome him home!
—Louder and thicker the thunderbolts fall:—and silent they come.

As when beyond Dongola the lion, whom hunters attack,
Stung by their darts from afar, leaps in, dividing them back;
So between Spaniard and Frenchman the *Victory* wedged with a shout,
Gun against gun; a cloud from her decks and lightning went out;
Iron hailing of pitiless death from the sulphury smoke;
Voices hoarse and parch'd, and blood from invisible stroke.
Each man stood to his work, though his mates fell smitten around,
As an oak of the wood, while his fellow, flame-shattered, besplinters the ground:—
Gluttons of danger for England, but sparing the foe as he lay;
For the spirit of Nelson was on them, and each was Nelson that day.

'She has struck!'—he shouted. 'She burns, the *Redoubtable*! Save whom we can,
Silence our guns:'—for in him the woman was great in the man,
In that heroic heart each drop girl-gentle and pure,
Dying by those he spared:—and now Death's triumph was sure!
From the deck the smoke-wreath clear'd, and the foe set his rifle in rest,
Dastardly aiming, where Nelson stood forth, with the stars on his breast,—
'In honour I gain'd them, in honour I die with them' . . . Then, in his place,
Fell. . . . 'Hardy! 'tis over; but let them not know': and he cover'd his face.

Silent, the whole fleet's darling they bore to the twilight below :
And above the war-thunder came shouting, as foe struck his flag after foe.

To his heart death rose : and for Hardy, the faithful, he cried in his pain,—
' How goes the day with us, Hardy ? '—' 'Tis ours ' :
—Then he knew, not in vain
Not in vain for his comrades and England he bled : how he left her secure,
Queen of her own blue seas, while his name and example endure.
O, like a lover he loved her ! for her as water he pours
Life-blood and life and love, given all for her sake, and for ours !
—' Kiss me, Hardy !—Thank God !—I have done my duty ! '—And then
Fled that heroic soul, and left not his like among men.

Hear ye the heart of a nation
Groan, for her saviour is gone ;
Gallant and true and tender,
Child and chieftain in one ?
Such another day never
England will weep for again,
When the triumph darken'd the triumph,
And the hero of heroes was slain.

F. T. Palgrave.

DAVID GWYN

David Gwyn was a Briton bold who pined a slave
in the hulks of Spain,
Taken years since in some mad emprise with Francis
Drake on the Spanish main.
Long in that cruel country he shared the captive's
bitter and hapless lot;
Slowly the dead years passed and left him dreaming
still of the days that were not,
Of tiny Radnor, or stately Brecknock, or Cardigan's
rain-swept heights maybe,
Or green Caermarthen, or rich Glamorgan, or Pem-
broke sitting on either sea.
Sickening within his squalid prison, while still as
the circling seasons came
The fierce sun beat on the brown Sierras, springtide
and summer and autumn the same,
Almost hope failed the dauntless sailor, chained in
an alien and hateful land,
Lonely and friendless, starved and buffeted, none to
pity or understand,
Pining always and ageing yearly as slow Time
whitened and bowed his head,
While longing and hate burned high and higher as
life sank lower and hope fell dead,
With brutes for his gaolers, and felons for comrades,
bound to him constantly night and day,
Eleven summers, eleven winters wasted their weari-
some length away.
Then there awoke round his floating prison clang of
hammers and bustle of men;
Shipwrights labouring late and early stirred old
hopes in his heart again.

'Spain will lay waste your heretic island with fire
and sword ere the winter be come,
And you and the rest of your felon crew shall row
the galleys which sack your home.'
The hot blood flushed to the prisoner's forehead, but
never a word in reply said he,
Toiling obediently days and weeks till the great fleet
sailed on the summer sea,
Splendid galleons towering skyward with gilded
masts and with streamers brave,
Floating proudly to martial music over the blue
Lusitanian wave,
Four great galleys leading the van, and in one midst
the close-thronged benches sate
David Gwyn, a forgotten oarsman, nursing a burning
heart of hate.

So along the windless ocean slow the great Armada
sped,
Two unclouded weeks of summer blazed the hot sun
overhead.
Hourly from the high deck-pulpits preaching rose
and chant and prayer,
And the cloying fumes of incense on the brisk
Atlantic air;
Courtiers fine and sea-worn sailors jesting the slow
hours away,
Silken sails and blazoned standards flapping idly day
by day,
And within his high poop-turret, more than mortal
to behold,
The High Admiral Medina lounging idly, clothed
with gold:
Not a thought of peril touched them, not a dream
of what might come,

Proudly sailing, sure of conquest, with the benison
of Rome,
And far down among the oarsmen's benches, fainting,
desperate,
David Gwyn, a patriot helpless with a burning heart
of hate.

With the roaring Bay of Biscay louder winds and
greyer skies,
And the galleons plunge and labour, and the rolling
mountains rise;
Blacker loom the drifting storm-clouds, fiercer grow
the wind and sea,
Far and wide the galleons scatter, driving, drifting
helplessly.
Higher mount the thundering surges; tossed to
heaven, or fathoms down,
Rear or plunge the cumbrous galleys while the
helpless oarsmen drown.
Like a diver the *Diana* slides head first beneath the
wave,
Not a soul of all her hundreds may her labouring
consorts save.
Now to larboard, now to starboard, shattered, tost
from side to side,
Helpless rolls the great Armada, shorn of all its
pomp and pride.
Down between those toppling ridges, groaning,
straining in his place,
David Gwyn among the oarsmen sits with triumph
in his face.

Then amid the roaring seas, when hope was gone and
death was near,
And the hearts of all the Spaniards sinking, failing
them for fear,

Boldly to the haughty Captain, David Gwyn the
oarsman went,
Veiling with a fearless frankness all the depth of his
intent.
'Quick, Señor! the ship is sinking; like her consort
will she be,
Buried soon with slaves and freemen, fathoms deep
beneath the sea.
Give me leave and I will save her; I have fought the
winds before,
Fought and conquered storms and foemen many
a time on sea and shore.'
And the haughty Captain, knowing David Gwyn
a seaman bold,
Since upon the Spanish main the foemen sailed and
fought of old,
Answered, turning to his prisoner: 'Save the ship,
and thou shalt gain
Freedom from thy life-long fetters, guerdon from
the Lord of Spain.'
Then from out the prisoner's eye there flashed
a sudden gleam of flame,
And a light of secret triumph o'er his clouded visage
came,
Thinking of his Cymric homestead and the fair years
that were gone,
And his glory who should save her from the thraldom
of the Don.
'I will save your ship,' he answered; 'trust me
wholly, have no fear:
Pack the soldiers under hatches; leave the main
deck free and clear.'
Doubting much the Don consented; only, lest the
slaves should rise,
By each oarsman sat a soldier, watching him with
jealous eyes.

Little knew he of the cunning, secret signs, and watchwords born
Of long years of cruel fetters, stripes and hunger, spite and scorn.
Little thought he every prisoner as in misery he sate
Hid a dagger in his waistband, waiting for the call of Fate.

David Gwyn, the valiant seaman, long time battled with the main,
Till the furious storm-wind slackened and the ship was safe again.
Sudden then he gave the signal, raised his arm and bared his head.
Every oarsman rising swiftly stabbed his helpless warder dead,
Seized his arms, and, fired with conquest, mad with vengeance, like a flood
On the crowded 'tween-decks bursting, left the Spaniards in their blood.

David Gwyn was now the Captain, and the great ship all his own;
Well the slaves obeyed their comrade, thus to sudden greatness grown.
Straight for France the stout *Vasana* shaping, lo upon her lee
Don Diego in the *Royal*, foaming through the stricken sea,
Driven by full four hundred oarsmen, nigh the monstrous galley came.
Then from out her thundering broadside swift as lightning burst the flame;
In among Gwyn's thronging seamen straight the hurtling missiles sped;
Nine strong sailors in a moment lay around their Captain dead.

David Gwyn, the dauntless Captain, turning to his comrades then—
'God has given you freedom; earn it: fear not; quit yourselves like men.
Lay the ship aboard the *Royal*: free your comrades and be free.'
The strong oarsmen bent, obedient, rowing swiftly, silently,
Till, as if in middle ocean striking on a hidden rock,
All the stout *Vasana's* timbers, quivering, reeling with the shock,
Straight on board the crowded *Royal* leapt that band of desperate men,
Freed the slaves, and left no Spaniard who might tell the tale again;
And the sister galleys stately with fair winds sped safely on,
Under David Gwyn, their Captain, and cast anchor at Bayonne.
And King Henry gave them largesse, and they parted every one
Free once more to his own country, and their evil days were done.

David Gwyn to England coming won the favour of the Queen;
Well her Grace esteemed his valour in the perils that had been.
What! had those swift, mighty galleys, which could wind and tide defy,
Winged with speed the slow Armada when our weak fleet hovered by?
Had not then that sullen quarry, ploughing helpless on the plain,
Turned and crushed the nimble hunters, and re-writ the fate of Spain?

Who shall tell? But his were doughty deeds and
worthy lasting fame,
Though the country he delivered never yet has
known his name.

Did he seek again the home of his youth, did he let
the years go peacefully by,
Breathing the sweet clear air of the hills, till his day
was done and he came to die?
By tiny Radnor, or stately Brecknock, or Cardigan's
rain-swept heights maybe,
Or green Caermarthen, or rich Glamorgan, or Pem-
broke sitting on either sea?
Did he dream sometimes 'mid the nights of storm
of those long-dead years in the hulks of Spain,
That stealthy onset, that dread revenge, with the
wild winds drowning the cries of pain?
Did the old man shudder to think of the blood, when
the knife pierced deep to the Spaniard's heart?
Nay, to each of us all is his Life assigned, his Work,
his Fate, his allotted Part.

SIR LEWIS MORRIS.

THE LAST REDOUBT

KACELYEVO'S slope still felt
The cannon's bolt and the rifles' pelt;
For a last redoubt up the hill remained,
By the Russ yet held, by the Turk not gained.

Mehemet Ali stroked his beard;
His lips were clinched and his look was weird;
Round him were ranks of his ragged folk,
Their faces blackened with blood and smoke.

'Clear me the Muscovite out!' he cried.
Then the name of 'Allah!' resounded wide,
And the rifles were clutched and the bayonets lowered,
And on to the last redoubt they poured.

One fell, and a second quickly stopped
The gap that he left when he reeled and dropped;
The second,—a third straight filled his place;
The third,—and a fourth kept up the race.

Many a fez in the mud was crushed,
Many a throat that cheered was hushed,
Many a heart that sought the crest
Found Allah's throne and a houri's breast.

Over their corpses the living sprang,
And the ridge with their musquet-rattle rang,
Till the faces that lined the last redoubt
Could see their faces and hear their shout.

In the redoubt a fair form towered,
That cheered up the brave and chid the coward;
Brandishing blade with a gallant air,
His head erect and his temples bare.

'Fly! they are on us!' his men implored;
But he waved them on with his waving sword.
'It cannot be held; 'tis no shame to go!'
But he stood with his face set hard to the foe.

Then clung they about him, and tugged, and knelt.
He drew a pistol out from his belt,
And fired it blank at the first that set
Foot on the edge of the parapet.

Over, that first one toppled; but on
Clambered the rest till their bayonets shone,
As hurriedly fled his men dismayed,
Not a bayonet's length from the length of his blade.

'Yield!' But aloft his steel he flashed,
And down on their steel it ringing clashed;
Then back he reeled with a bladeless hilt,
His honour full, but his life-blood spilt.

Mehemet Ali came and saw
The riddled breast and the tender jaw.
'Make him a bier of your arms,' he said,
'And daintily bury this dainty dead!'

They lifted him up from the dabbled ground;
His limbs were shapely, and soft, and round.
No down on his lip, on his cheek no shade:—
'Bismillah!' they cried, ''tis an Infidel maid!'

'Dig her a grave where she stood and fell,
'Gainst the jackal's scratch and the vulture's smell.
Did the Muscovite men like their maidens fight,
In their lines we had scarcely supped to-night.'

So a deeper trench 'mong the trenches there
Was dug, for the form as brave as fair;
And none, till the Judgement trump and shout,
Shall drive her out of the Last Redoubt.

ALFRED AUSTIN.

THE RÉVEILLE

HARK! I hear the tramp of thousands,
And of armèd men the hum;
Lo! a nation's hosts have gathered
Round the quick alarming drum,—
Saying, 'Come,
Freemen, come!
Ere your heritage be wasted,' said the quick alarming drum.

'Let me of my heart take counsel:
War is not of Life the sum;
Who shall stay and reap the harvest
When the autumn days shall come?'
But the drum
Echoed, 'Come
Death shall reap the braver harvest,' said the solemn-sounding drum.

'But when won the coming battle,
What of profit springs therefrom?
What if conquest, subjugation,
Even greater ills become?'
But the drum
Answered 'Come
You must do the sum to prove it', said the Yankee-answering drum.

'What if 'mid the cannons' thunder,
Whistling shot and bursting bomb,
When my brothers fall around me,
Should my heart grow cold and numb?'
But the drum
Answered, 'Come!
Better there in death united, than in life a recreant —Come!'

Thus they answered,—hoping, fearing,
Some in faith, and doubting some,
Till a trumpet-voice proclaiming,
Said, 'My chosen people, come!'
Then the drum,
Lo! was dumb,
For the great heart of the nation, throbbing, answered, 'Lord, we come!'

BRET HARTE.

JOHN BURNS OF GETTYSBURG

HAVE you heard the story that gossips tell
Of Burns of Gettysburg?—No? Ah, well:
Brief is the glory that hero earns,
Briefer the story of poor John Burns:
He was the fellow who won renown,—
The only man who didn't back down
When the rebels rode through his native town:
But held his own in the fight next day,
When all his townsfolk ran away.
That was in July sixty-three,
The very day that General Lee,
Flower of Southern chivalry,
Baffled and beaten, backward reeled
From a stubborn Meade and a barren field.
I might tell how but the day before,
John Burns stood at his cottage door,
Looking down the village street,
Where, in the shade of his peaceful vine,
He heard the low of his gathered kine,
And felt their breath with incense sweet;
Or I might say, when the sunset burned
The old farm gable, he thought it turned
The milk that fell like a babbling flood
Into the milk-pail red as blood!

Or how he fancied the hum of bees
Were bullets buzzing among the trees.
But all such fanciful thoughts as these
Were strange to a practical man like Burns,
Who minded only his own concerns,
Troubled no more by fancies fine
Than one of his calm-eyed, long-tailed kine,—
Quite old-fashioned and matter-of-fact,
Slow to argue, but quick to act.
That was the reason, as some folk say,
He fought so well on that terrible day.

And it was terrible. On the right
Raged for hours the heady fight,
Thundered the battery's double bass,—
Difficult music for men to face;
While on the left—where now the graves
Undulate like the living waves
That all that day unceasing swept
Up to the pits the rebels kept—
Round shot ploughed the upland glades,
Sown with bullets, reaped with blades;
Shattered fences here and there
Tossed their splinters in the air;
The very trees were stripped and bare;
The barns that once held yellow grain
Were heaped with harvests of the slain;
The cattle bellowed on the plain,
The turkeys screamed with might and main,
And brooding barn-fowl left their rest
With strange shells bursting in each nest.

Just where the tide of battle turns,
Erect and lonely stood old John Burns.
How do you think the man was dressed?
He wore an ancient long buff vest,

Yellow as saffron,—but his best;
And, buttoned over his manly breast,
Was a bright blue coat, with a rolling collar,
And large gilt buttons,—size of a dollar,—
With tails that the country-folk called 'swaller'.
He wore a broad-brimmed, bell-crowned hat,
White as the locks on which it sat.
Never had such a sight been seen
For forty years on the village green,
Since old John Burns was a country beau,
And went to the 'quiltings' long ago.

Close at his elbows all that day,
Veterans of the Peninsula,
Sunburnt and bearded, charged away;
And striplings, downy of lip and chin,—
Clerks that the Home Guard mustered in,—
Glanced, as they passed, at the hat he wore,
Then at the rifle his right hand bore;
And hailed him, from out their youthful lore,
With scraps of a slangy *répertoire*:
'How are you, White Hat!' 'Put her through!'
'Your head's level,' and 'Bully for you!'
Called him 'Daddy',—begged he'd disclose
The name of the tailor who made his clothes,
And what was the value he set on those;
While Burns, unmindful of jeer and scoff,
Stood there picking the rebels off,—
With his long brown rifle and bell-crown hat,
And the swallow-tails they were laughing at.

'Twas but a moment, for that respect
Which clothes all courage their voices checked;
And something the wildest could understand
Spake in the old man's strong right hand,

And his corded throat, and the lurking frown
Of his eyebrows under his old bell-crown;
Until, as they gazed, there crept an awe
Through the ranks in whispers, and some men saw,
In the antique vestments and long white hair,
The Past of the Nation in battle there;
And some of the soldiers since declare
That the gleam of his old white hat afar,
Like the crested plume of the brave Navarre,
That day was their oriflamme of war.

So raged the battle. You know the rest:
How the rebels, beaten and backward pressed,
Broke at the final charge and ran.
At which John Burns—a practical man—
Shouldered his rifle, unbent his brows,
And then went back to his bees and cows.

That is the story of old John Burns;
This the moral the reader learns:
In fighting the battle, the question 's whether
You'll show a hat that 's white, or a feather!

BRET HARTE.

THE CASTERBRIDGE CAPTAINS

(Khyber Pass, 1842)

A Tradition of J. B. L——, T. G. B——, and J. L——.

THREE captains went to Indian wars,
And only one returned:
Their mate of yore, he singly wore
The laurels all had earned.

At home he sought the ancient aisle
  Wherein, untrumped of fame,
The three had sat in pupilage,
  And each had carved his name.

The names, rough-hewn, of equal size,
  Stood on the panel still;
Unequal since.—' 'Twas theirs to aim,
  Mine was it to fulfil!'

—' Who saves his life shall lose it, friends!'
  Outspake the preacher then,
Unweeting he his listener, who
  Looked at the names again.

That he had come, and they'd been stayed,
  Was but the chance of war:
Another chance, and they'd sat here,
  And he had lain afar.

Yet he saw something in the lives,
  Of those who'd ceased to live
That sphered them with a majesty
  Which living failed to give.

Transcendent triumph in return
  No longer lit his brain;
Transcendence rayed the distant urn
  Where slept the fallen twain.

THOMAS HARDY.

EMBARKATION

HERE, where Vespasian's legions struck the sands,
And Cerdic with his Saxons entered in,
And Henry's army leapt afloat to win
Convincing triumphs over neighbour lands,

Vaster battalions press for further strands,
To argue in the self-same bloody mode
Which this late age of thought, and pact, and code,
Still fails to mend.—Now deckward tramp the bands,

Yellow as autumn leaves, alive as spring;
And as each host draws out upon the sea
Beyond which lies the tragical To-be,
None dubious of the cause, none murmuring,

Wives, sisters, parents, wave white hands and smile,
As if they know not that they weep the while.

THOMAS HARDY.

THE GOING OF THE BATTERY

WIVES' LAMENT

(November 2, 1899)

I

O IT was sad enough, weak enough, mad enough—
Light in their loving as soldiers can be—
First to risk choosing them, leave alone losing them
Now, in far battle, beyond the South Sea! . . .

II

—Rain came down drenchingly; but we unblenchingly
Trudged on beside them through mirk and through mire,
They stepping steadily—only too readily!—
Scarce as if stepping brought parting-time nigher.

III

Great guns were gleaming there, living things seeming there,
Cloaked in their tar-cloths, upmouthed to the night;
Wheels wet and yellow from axle to felloe,
Throats blank of sound, but prophetic to sight.

IV

Gas-glimmers drearily, blearily, eerily
Lit our pale faces outstretched for one kiss,
While we stood prest to them, with a last quest to them
Not to court perils that honour could miss.

V

Sharp were those sighs of ours, blinded these eyes of ours,
When at last moved away under the arch
All we loved. Aid for them each woman prayed for them,
Treading back slowly the track of their march.

VI

Some one said: 'Nevermore will they come: evermore
Are they now lost to us.' O it was wrong!
Though may be hard their ways, some Hand will guard their ways,
Bear them through safely, in brief time or long.

VII

—Yet, voices haunting us, daunting us, taunting us,
Hint in the night-time when life-beats are low
Other and graver things. . . . Hold we to braver things,
Wait we, in trust, what Time's fullness shall show.

THOMAS HARDY.

THE SOULS OF THE SLAIN

I

THE thick lids of Night closed upon me
Alone at the Bill
Of the Isle by the Race[1]—
Many-caverned, bald, wrinkled of face—
And with darkness and silence the spirit was on me
To brood and be still.

II

No wind fanned the flats of the ocean.
Or promontory sides,
Or the ooze by the strand,
Or the bent-bearded slope of the land,
Whose base took its rest amid everlong motion
Of criss-crossing tides.

III

Soon from out of the Southward seemed nearing
A whirr, as of wings
Waved by mighty-vanned flies,
Or by night-moths of measureless size,
And in softness and smoothness wellnigh beyond hearing
Of corporal things.

IV

And they bore to the bluff, and alighted—
A dim-discerned train
Of sprites without mould,
Frameless souls none might touch or might hold—
On the ledge by the turreted lantern, far-sighted
By men of the main.

[1] The "Race" is the turbulent sea-area off the Bill of Portland, where contrary tides meet.

V

And I heard them say ' Home ! ' and I knew them
For souls of the felled
On the earth's nether bord
Under Capricorn, whither they'd warred,
And I neared in my awe, and gave heedfulness to them
With breathings inheld.

VI

Then, it seemed, there approached from the northward
A senior soul-flame
Of the like filmy hue :
And he met them and spake : ' Is it you,
O my men ? ' Said they, ' Aye ! We bear homeward and hearthward
To feast on our fame ! '

VII

' I've flown there before you,' he said then :
' Your households are well ;
But—your kin linger less
On your glory and war-mightiness
Than on dearer things.'—' Dearer ? ' cried these from the dead then,
' Of what do they tell ? '

VIII

' Some mothers muse sadly, and murmur
Your doings as boys—
Recall the quaint ways
Of your babyhood's innocent days.
Some pray that, ere dying, your faith had grown firmer,
And higher your joys.

IX

'A father broods: "Would I had set him
To some humble trade,
And so slacked his high fire,
And his passionate martial desire;
Had told him no stories to woo him and whet him
To this dire crusade!"'

X

'And, General, how hold out our sweethearts,
Sworn loyal as doves?'
—'Many mourn; many think
It is not unattractive to prink
Them in sables for heroes. Some fickle and fleet hearts
Have found them new loves.'

XI

'And our wives?' quoth another resignedly,
'Dwell they on our deeds?'
—'Deeds of home; that live yet
Fresh as new—deeds of fondness or fret;
Ancient words that were kindly expressed or unkindly,
These, these have their heeds.'

XII

—'Alas! then it seems that our glory
Weighs less in their thought
Than our old homely acts,
And the long-ago commonplace facts
Of our lives—held by us as scarce part of our story,
And rated as nought!'

XIII

Then bitterly some: 'Was it wise now
To raise the tomb-door
For such knowledge? Away!'
But the rest: 'Fame we prized till to-day;
Yet that hearts keep us green for old kindness we prize now
A thousand times more!'

XIV

Thus speaking, the trooped apparitions
Began to disband
And resolve them in two:
Those whose record was lovely and true
Bore to northward for home: those of bitter traditions
Again left the land,

XV

And, towering to seaward in legions,
They paused at a spot
Overbending the Race—
That engulphing, ghast, sinister place—
Whither headlong they plunged, to the fathomless regions
Of myriads forgot.

XVI

And the spirits of those who were homing
Passed on, rushingly,
Like the Pentecost Wind;
And the whirr of their wayfaring thinned
And surceased on the sky, and but left in the gloaming
Sea-mutterings and me.

THOMAS HARDY.

WATERLOO

NEY and FRIANT now lead forward the last and most desperate assault of the day. in charges of the Old and Middle Guard, the attack by DONZELOT and ALLIX further east still continuing as a support. It is about a quarter-past seven, and the midsummer evening is fine after the wet night and morning, the sun approaching its setting in a sky of gorgeous colours.

The picked and toughened Guard, many of whom stood in the ranks at Austerlitz and Wagram, have been drawn up in three or four echelons, the foremost of which now advances up the slopes to the Allies' position. The others follow at intervals, the drummers beating the 'pas de charge'.

CHORUS OF RUMOURS (aerial music)

Twice thirty throats of couchant cannonry—
Ranked in a hollow curve, to close their blaze
Upon the advancing files—wait silently
Like to black bulls at gaze.

The Guard approaches nearer and more near:
To touch-hole moves each match of smoky sheen:
The ordnance roars: the van-ranks disappear
As if wiped off the scene.

The aged Friant falls as it resounds;
Ney's charger drops—his fifth on this sore day—
Its rider from the quivering body bounds
And forward foots his way.

The cloven columns tread the English height,
Seize guns, repulse battalions rank by rank,
While horse and foot artillery heavily bite
Into their front and flank.

It nulls the power of a flesh-built frame
To live within that zone of missiles. Back
The Old Guard, staggering, climbs to whence it came.
The fallen define its track.

The second echelon of the Imperial Guard has come up to the assault. Its columns have borne upon HALKETT's right. HALKETT, desperate to keep his wavering men firm, himself seizes and waves the flag of the Thirty-third, in which act he falls wounded. But the men rally. Meanwhile the Fifty-second, covered by the Seventy-first, has advanced across the front, and charges the Imperial Guard on the flank.

The third echelon next arrives at the English lines and squares; rushes through the very focus of their fire, and seeing nothing more in front, raises a shout.

IMPERIAL GUARD

The Emperor! It 's victory!

WELLINGTON

Stand up, Guards!
Form line upon the front face of the square!

Two thousand of MAITLAND's Guards, hidden in the hollow roadway, thereupon spring up, form as ordered, and reveal themselves as a fence of levelled firelocks four deep. The flints click in a multitude, the pans flash, and volley after volley is poured into the bear-skinned figures of the massed French, who kill COLONEL D'OYLEY in returning the fire.

WELLINGTON

Now drive the fellows in! They will not stand.

ADAM's brigade, including the Fifty-second under COLONEL COLBORNE, attacks the French guard.

COLBORNE (shouting)

Forward! Right shoulders forward, Fifty-second!

WELLINGTON

Ha, Colborne—you say well! Go on; go on!
You'll do it now!

COLBORNE converges on the French guard with the Fifty-second, and the former splits into two as the climax comes. ADAM, MAITLAND, and COLBORNE pursue their advantage. The Imperial columns are broken, and their confusion is increased by grape-shot from BOLTON's battery.

Campbell, this order next:
Vivian's hussars are to support, and bear
Against the cavalry towards Belle Alliance.
Go—let him know.

Sir C. CAMPBELL departs with the order. Soon VIVIAN'S and VANDELEUR'S light horse are seen advancing, and in due time the French cavalry are rolled back.

WELLINGTON goes in the direction of the hussars with UXBRIDGE. A cannon-shot hisses past.

UXBRIDGE (starting)

I have lost my leg, by God!

WELLINGTON

By God, and have you! Ay; the wind o' the shot
Blew past the withers of my Copenhagen
Like the foul sweeping of a witch's broom.—
Aha—they are giving way!

While UXBRIDGE is being helped to the rear, WELLINGTON makes a sign to SALTOUN, Colonel of the First Footguards.

SALTOUN (shouting)

Boys, now 's your time;
Forward and win.

FRENCH VOICES

The Guard gives way—we are beaten!

They recede down the hill, carrying confusion into NAPOLÉON'S centre just as the Prussians press forward at a right angle from the other side of the field. NAPOLÉON is seen standing in the hollow beyond La Haye Sainte, alone, except for the presence of COUNT FLAHAULT, his aide-de-camp. His lips move with a sudden exclamation.

SPIRIT OF THE YEARS

He says 'Now all is lost! The clocks of the world
Strike my last empery-hour.'

Towards La Haye Sainte the French of DONZELOT and ALLIX, who are fighting KEMPT, PACK, KRUSE, and LAMBERT, seeing what has happened to the Old and Middle Guard,

lose heart and recede likewise; so that the whole French line rolls back like a tide. Simultaneously the Prussians are pressing forward at Papelote and La Haye. The retreat of the French grows into a panic.

FRENCH VOICES (despairingly)
We are betrayed!

WELLINGTON rides at a gallop to the most salient point of the English position, halts, and waves his hat as a signal to all the army. The sign is answered by a cheer along the length of the line.

WELLINGTON
No cheering yet, my lads; but bear ahead,
Before the inflamed face of the west out there
Dons blackness. So you'll round your victory!

The few aides that are left unhurt dart hither and thither with this message, and the whole English host and its allies advance in an ordered mass down the hill except some of the artillery, who cannot get their wheels over the bank of corpses in front. Trumpets, drums, and bugles resound with the advance.

The streams of French fugitives as they run are cut down and shot by their pursuers, whose clothes and contracted features are blackened by smoke and cartridge-biting, and soiled with loam and blood. Some French blow out their own brains as they fly. The sun drops below the horizon while the slaughter goes on.

SPIRIT OF THE PITIES
Is this the last Esdraelon of a moil
For mortal man's effacement?

SPIRIT IRONIC
Warfare mere,
Plied by the Managed for the Managers;
To wit: by frenzied folks who profit nought
For those who profit all!

SPIRIT OF THE PITIES
Between the jars
Of these who live, I hear uplift and move
The bones of those who placidly have lain

Within the sacred garths of yon grey fanes—
Nivelles, and Plancenoit, and Braine l'Alleud—
Beneath unmemoried mounds through deedless years
Their dry jaws quake: 'What Sabaoth is this,
That shakes us in our unobtrusive shrouds,
As though our tissues did not yet abhor
The fevered feats of life?'

SPIRIT IRONIC

Mere fancy's feints!
How know the coffined what comes after them,
Even though it whirl them to the Pleiades?—
Turn to the real.

SPIRIT OF RUMOUR

That hatless, smoke-smirched shape
There in the vale, is still the living Ney,
His sabre broken in his hand, his clothes
Slitten with ploughing ball and bayonet,
One epaulette shorn away. He calls out 'Follow!'
And a devoted handful follow him
Once more into the carnage. Hear his voice.

NEY (calling afar)

My friends, see how a Marshal of France can die!

SPIRIT OF THE PITIES

Alas, not here in battle, something hints,
But elsewhere! . . . Who 's the sworded brother-chief
Swept past him in the tumult?

SPIRIT OF RUMOUR

D'Erlon he.

Ney cries to him:

NEY

Be sure of this, my friend,
If we don't perish here at English hands,
Nothing is left us but the halter-noose
The Bourbons will provide!

SPIRIT IRONIC

A caustic wit,
And apt, to those who deal in adumbrations!

The brave remnant of the Imperial Guard repulses for a time the English cavalry under Vivian, in which MAJOR HOWARD and LIEUTENANT GUNNING of the Tenth Hussars are shot. But the war-weary French cannot cope with the pursuing infantry, helped by grape-shot from the batteries. NAPOLÉON endeavours to rally them. It is his last effort as a warrior; and the rally ends feebly.

NAPOLÉON

They are crushed! So it has ever been since Creçy!

He is thrown violently off his horse, and bids his page bring another, which he mounts, and is lost to sight.

SPIRIT OF RUMOUR

He loses his last chance of dying well!

The three or four heroic battalions of the Old and Middle Guard fall back step by step, halting to reform in square when they get badly broken and shrunk. At last they are surrounded by the English Guards and other foot, who keep firing on them and smiting them to smaller and smaller numbers. GENERAL CAMBRONNE is inside the square.

COLONEL HUGH HALKETT (shouting)

Surrender! And preserve those heroes' lives!

CAMBRONNE (with exasperation)

Mer-r-r-rde! . . . You've to deal with desperates, man, to-day:
Life is a byword here!

Hollow laughter, as from people in hell, comes approvingly from the remains of the Old Guard. The English proceed with their massacre, the devoted band thins and thins, and a ball strikes CAMBRONNE, who falls, and is trampled over.

SPIRIT OF THE YEARS

Observe that all wide sight and self-command
Desert these throngs now driven to demonry
By the Immanent Unrecking. Nought remains

But vindictiveness here amid the strong
And there amid the weak an impotent rage.

SPIRIT OF THE PITIES
Why prompts the Will so senseless-shaped a doing?

SPIRIT OF THE YEARS
I have told thee that It works unwittingly,
As one possessed, not judging.

SEMICHORUS I OF IRONIC SPIRITS (aerial music)
Of Its doings if It knew,
What It does It would not do!

SEMICHORUS II
Since It knows not, what far sense
Speeds Its spinnings in the Immense?

SEMICHORUS I
None; a fixed foresightless dream
Is Its whole philosopheme.

SEMICHORUS II
Just so; an unconscious planning,
Like a potter raptly panning!

CHORUS
Are then, Love and Light Its aim—
Good Its glory, Bad Its blame?
Nay; to alter evermore
Things from what they were before.

SPIRIT OF THE YEARS
Your knowings of the Unknowable declared,
Let the last pictures of the Play be bared.

Enter, fighting, more English and Prussians against the French. NEY is caught by the throng and borne ahead. RULLIÈRE hides an eagle beneath his coat and follows NEY. NAPOLÉON is involved none knows where in the crowd of fugitives.

WELLINGTON and BLÜCHER come severally to the view. They meet in the dusk and salute warmly. The Prussian

bands strike up 'God save the King' as the two shake hands. From his gestures of assent it can be seen that WELLINGTON accepts BLÜCHER's offer to pursue.

The reds disappear from the sky, and the dusk grows deeper. The action of the battle degenerates to a hunt, and recedes further and further into the distance southward. When the tramplings and shouts of the combatants have dwindled, the lower sounds are noticeable that come from the wounded: hopeless appeals, cries for water, elaborate blasphemies, and impotent execrations of Heaven and hell. In the vast and dusky shambles black slouching shapes begin to move, the plunderers of the dead and dying.

The night grows clear and beautiful, and the moon shines musingly down. But instead of the sweet smell of green herbs and dewy rye as at her last beaming upon these fields, there is now the stench of gunpowder and a muddy stew of crushed crops and gore.

SPIRIT OF THE YEARS

So hath the Urging Immanence used to-day
Its inadvertent might to field this fray;
And Europe's wormy dynasties rerobe
Themselves in their old gilt, to dazzle anew the globe!

The scene is curtained by a night-mist.

THOMAS HARDY.

THOBAL [1]

THERE was bloody work in the border hills, as it drew to Easter-tide,
And the flag that waved for England was humbled there in its pride.

They were grim familiar tidings, those few dark words of doom,
For the wide outposts of Empire are marked by the lonely tomb;—

[1] Relating to an episode in the outbreak in Manipur, 1892, when Lieutenant Grant held the little fort of Thobal against tremendous odds and won the V.C.

There was no new phase in the story, but another
page writ red,
The ambush laid, and the few too few, and the roll
of English dead!

And we doubted not of the duty done, we were
sure they had died like men,
And we knew that the flag of England would float
on its mast again.

But it chanced there were thirty Ghoorkas who
were marching on their way,
With fifty more of the Burman folk that have
learned the word 'obey',

When the scouts brought in the tidings, and the
blood lust made them mad,
These eighty men of the loyal folk led on by an
English lad.

And he did not wait nor waver, he took no count
of the odds,
For he knew that he stood for England in the face
of the painted gods;

Though the hills poured down their thousands, if
the sturdy pluck held true,
He would stand his ground and show them what
an English lad could do.

So a week went by in silence, and at last the message
came,
And the eighty men of Thobal had saved the English
name.

Then speak, oh mother island, for was it not well
done?
Be proud of thy step-children, and proudest of thy
son!

Once more the world has seen it, far under alien skies,
The beating heart of England is where the old flag flies.

What though they deem thou sleepest, and smile to see thee range,
And follow wandering voices on many a wind of change;

What though men say thy gospel is the counter and the till,
The boys we send to the far world's end have the heart of the lion still;

The heart of Richard Grenville when he fought with the fifty-three,
As he bled to death in the battered hull that was lost in the Spanish sea;

The heart of Walter Raleigh, and the heart of Francis Drake,
The heart of all the heroes who have lived for England's sake;

The heart of those who ventured on many a hopeless quest,
Till their dear divine unreason had joined the east and west.

You boys that man the warships that are the ocean queen's,
Come back and tell your fathers what that name of England means.

Round all the world's wide girdle, in Asia's dark defiles,
In the yellow sands of torrid lands, in tempest-sundered isles,

O'er many a lonely station the trebled crosses wave,
For justice to the weaker, and for freedom to the slave!

God send her rulers wisdom,—the task to tame the lands,
The peril path of Empire is safe in these young hands.

Though the air be filled with strange new sound, and perplexed with doubtful creeds,
The boys we send to the far world's end still know what England needs.

SIR RENNELL RODD.

CREMONA

(1702)

THE Grenadiers of Austria are proper men and tall;
The Grenadiers of Austria have scaled the city wall;
They have marched from far away
Ere the dawning of the day,
And the morning saw them masters of Cremona.

There 's not a man to whisper, there 's not a horse to neigh,
Of the footmen of Lorraine and the riders of Duprés;
They have crept up every street,
In the market-place they meet,
They are holding every vantage in Cremona.

The Marshal Villeroy he has started from his bed;
The Marshal Villeroy has no wig upon his head;
'I have lost my men!' quoth he,
'And my men they have lost me,
And I sorely fear we both have lost Cremona.'

Prince Eugène of Austria is in the market-place ;
Prince Eugène of Austria has smiles upon his face ;
Says he, ' Our work is done,
For the citadel is won,
And the black and yellow flag flies o'er Cremona.'

Major Dan O'Mahony is in the barrack square,
And just six hundred Irish lads are waiting for him there ;
Says he, ' Come in your shirt,
And you won't take any hurt,
For the morning air is pleasant in Cremona.'

Major Dan O'Mahony is at the barrack gate,
And just six hundred Irish lads will neither stay nor wait ;
There 's Dillon and there 's Burke,
And there'll be some bloody work
Ere the Kaiserlics shall boast they hold Cremona.

Major Dan O'Mahony has reached the river fort,
And just six hundred Irish lads are joining in the sport ;
' Come, take a hand ! ' says he,
' And if you will stand by me,
Then it 's glory to the man who takes Cremona ! '

Prince Eugène of Austria has frowns upon his face,
And loud he calls his Galloper of Irish blood and race :
' MacDonnell, ride, I pray,
To your countrymen, and say,
That only they are left in all Cremona ! '

MacDonnell he has reined his mare beside the river dyke,
And he has tied the parley flag upon a sergeant's pike ;

Six companies were there,
From Limerick and Clare,
The last of all the guardians of Cremona.

'Now, Major Dan O'Mahony, give up the river gate,
Or, Major Dan O'Mahony, you'll find it is too late:
For when I gallop back,
'Tis the signal for attack,
And no quarter for the Irish in Cremona!'

And Major Dan he laughed: 'Faith, if what you say be true,
And if they will not come until they hear again from you,
Then there will be no attack,
For you're never going back,
And we'll keep you snug and safely in Cremona.'

All the weary day the German stormers came,
All the weary day they were faced by fire and flame,
They have filled the ditch with dead,
And the river 's running red;
But they cannot win the gateway of Cremona.

All the weary day, again, again, again,
The horsemen of Duprés and the footmen of Lorraine,
Taafe and Herberstein,
And the riders of the Rhine;
It 's a mighty price they're paying for Cremona.

Time and time they came with the deep-mouthed German roar,
Time and time they broke like the wave upon the shore;
For better men were there
From Limerick and Clare,
And who will take the gateway of Cremona?

Prince Eugène has watched, and he gnaws his nether lip;
Prince Eugène has cursed as he saw his chances slip:
'Call off! Call off!' he cried,
'It is nearing eventide,
And I fear our work is finished in Cremona.'

Says Wauchop to McAuliffe, 'Their fire is growing slack.'
Says Major Dan O'Mahony, 'It is their last attack;
But who will stop the game
While there 's light to play the same,
And to walk a short way with them from Cremona?'

And so they snarl behind them, and beg them turn and come:
They have taken Neuberg's standard, they have taken Diak's drum;
And along the winding Po,
Beard on shoulder, stern and slow,
The Kaiserlics are riding from Cremona.

Just two hundred Irish lads are shouting on the wall;
Four hundred more are lying who can hear no slogan call;
But what 's the odds of that,
For it 's all the same to Pat
If he pays his debt in Dublin or Cremona.

Says General de Vandray, 'You've done a soldier's work!
And every tongue in France shall talk of Dillon and of Burke!
Ask what you will this day,
And be it what it may,
It is granted to the heroes of Cremona.'

'Why, then,' says Dan O'Mahony, 'one favour we entreat,
We were called a little early, and our toilet's not complete.
We've no quarrel with the shirt,
But the breeches wouldn't hurt,
For the evening air is chilly in Cremona.'

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE.

HAWKE

IN seventeen hundred and fifty-nine,
When Hawke came swooping from the West,
The French King's Admiral with twenty of the line,
Was sailing forth to sack us, out of Brest.
The ports of France were crowded, the quays of France a-hum
With thirty thousand soldiers marching to the drum,
For bragging time was over and fighting time was come
When Hawke came swooping from the West.

'Twas long past noon of a wild November day
When Hawke came swooping from the West;
He heard the breakers thundering in Quiberon Bay,
But he flew the flag for battle, line abreast.
Down upon the quicksands roaring out of sight
Fiercely beat the storm-wind, darkly fell the night,
But they took the foe for pilot and the cannon's glare for light
When Hawke came swooping from the West.

The Frenchmen turned like a covey down the wind
When Hawke came swooping from the West;
One he sank with all hands, one he caught and pinned,
And the shallows and the storm took the rest.
The guns that should have conquered us they rusted on the shore,
The men that would have mastered us they drummed and marched no more,
For England was England, and a mighty brood she bore
When Hawke came swooping from the West.

HENRY NEWBOLT.

SAN STEFANO

A BALLAD OF THE BOLD *MENELAUS*

IT was morning at St. Helen's, in the great and gallant days,
And the sea beneath the sun glittered wide,
When the frigate set her courses, all a-shimmer in the haze,
And she hauled her cable home and took the tide.
She'd a right fighting company, three hundred men and more,
Nine and forty guns in tackle running free;
And they cheered her from the shore for her colours at the fore,
When the bold *Menelaus* put to sea.

She'd a right fighting company, three hundred men and more,
Nine and forty guns in tackle running free;
And they cheered her from the shore for her colours at the fore,
When the bold Menelaus *put to sea.*

She was clear of Monte Cristo, she was heading for
the land,
When she spied a pennant red and white and
blue;
They were foemen, and they knew it, and they'd
half a league in hand,
But she flung aloft her royals and she flew.

She was nearer, nearer, nearer, they were caught
beyond a doubt,
But they slipped her, into Orbetello Bay,
And the lubbers gave a shout as they paid their
cables out,
With the guns grinning round them where they
lay.

Now Sir Peter was a captain of a famous fighting
race,
Son and grandson of an admiral was he;
And he looked upon the batteries, he looked upon
the chase,
And he heard the shout that echoed out to sea.

And he called across the decks, 'Ay! the cheering
might be late
If they kept it till the *Menelaus* runs;
Bid the master and his mate heave the lead and
lay her straight
For the prize lying yonder by the guns.'

When the summer moon was setting, into Orbetello
Bay
Came the *Menelaus* gliding like a ghost;
And her boats were manned in silence, and in silence
pulled away,
And in silence every gunner took his post.

With a volley from her broadside the citadel she woke,
And they hammered back like heroes all the night;
But before the morning broke she had vanished through the smoke
With her prize upon her quarter grappled tight.

It was evening at St. Helen's, in the great and gallant time,
And the sky behind the down was flushing far;
And the flags were all a-flutter, and the bells were all a-chime,
When the frigate cast her anchor off the bar.

She'd a right fighting company, three hundred men and more,
Nine and forty guns in tackle running free;
And they cheered her from the shore for her colours at the fore,
When the bold *Menelaus* came from sea.

She'd a right fighting company, three hundred men and more,
Nine and forty guns in tackle running free;
And they cheered her from the shore for her colours at the fore,
When the bold Menelaus *came from sea.*

HENRY NEWBOLT.

HYMN BEFORE ACTION

THE earth is full of anger,
The seas are dark with wrath,
The Nations in their harness
Go up against our path:

Ere yet we loose the legions—
  Ere yet we draw the blade,
Jehovah of the Thunders,
  Lord God of Battles, aid!

High lust and froward bearing,
  Proud heart, rebellious brow—
Deaf ear and soul uncaring,
  We seek Thy mercy now!
The sinner that forswore Thee,
  The fool that passed Thee by,
Our times are known before Thee—
  Lord, grant us strength to die!

From panic, pride, and terror,
  Revenge that knows no rein,
Light haste and lawless error,
  Protect us yet again.
Cloak Thou our undeserving,
  Make firm the shuddering breath,
In silence and unswerving
  To taste Thy lesser death!

Ah! Mary pierced with sorrow,
  Remember, reach and save
The soul that comes to-morrow
  Before the God that gave;
Since each was born of woman,
  For each at utter need—
True comrade and true foeman—
  Madonna, intercede!

E'en now their vanguard gathers,
  E'en now we face the fray—
As Thou didst help our fathers,
  Help Thou our host to-day!

Fulfilled of signs and wonders,
In life, in death made clear—
Jehovah of the Thunders,
Lord God of Battles hear!

RUDYARD KIPLING.

THE LAST CHARGE AT ETHANDUNE

'BROTHERS at arms,' said Alfred,
'On this side lies the foe;
Are slavery and starvation flowers,
That you should pluck them so?

'For whether is it better
To be prodded with Danish poles,
Having hewn a chamber in a ditch,
And hounded like a howling witch,
Or smoked to death in holes?

'Or that before the red cock crow
All we, a thousand strong,
Go down the dark road to God's house,
Singing a Wessex song?

'To sweat a slave to a race of slaves,
To drink up infamy?
No, brothers, by your leave, I think
Death is a better ale to drink,
And by all the stars of Christ that sink,
The Danes shall drink with me.

'To grow old cowed in a conquered land,
With the sun itself discrowned,
To see trees crouch and cattle slink—
Death is a better ale to drink,
And by high Death on the fell brink,
That flagon shall go round.

'Though dead are all the paladins
Whom glory had in ken,
Though all your thunder-sworded thanes
With proud hearts died among the Danes,
While a man remains, great war remains;
Now is a war of men.

'The men that tear the furrows,
The men that fell the trees,
When all their lords be lost and dead
The bondsmen of the earth shall tread
The tyrants of the seas.

'The wheel of the roaring stillness
Of all labours under the sun,
Speed the wild work as well at least
As the whole world's work is done.

'Let Hildred hack the shield-wall
Clean as he hacks the hedge;
Let Gurth the fowler stand as cool
As he stands on the chasm's edge;

'Let Gorlias ride the sea-kings
As Gorlias rides the sea,
Then let all hell and Denmark drive,
Yelling to all its fiends alive,
And not a rag care we.'

When Alfred's word was ended
Stood firm that feeble line,
Each in his place with club or spear,
And fury deeper than deep fear,
And smiles as sour as brine.

And the King held up the horn and said,
'See ye my father's horn,

That Egbert blew in his empery,
Once, when he rode out commonly,
Twice when he rode for venery,
And thrice on the battle-morn.

'But heavier fates have fallen
The horn of the Wessex kings,
And I blew once, the riding sign,
To call you to the fighting line
And glory and all good things.

'And now two blasts, the hunting sign,
Because we turn to bay;
But I will not blow the three blasts,
Till we be lost or they.

'And now I blow the hunting sign,
Charge some, by rule and rod;
But when I blow the battle sign,
Charge all, and go to God.'

Wild stared the Danes at the double ways
Where they loitered, all at large,
As that dark line for the last time
Doubled the knee to charge—

And caught their weapons clumsily,
And marvelled how and why—
In such degree, by rule and rod,
The people of the peace of God
Went roaring down to die.

Then the last charge went blindly,
And all too lost for fear:
The Danes closed round, a roaring ring,
And twenty clubs rose o'er the King,
Four Danes hewed at him, halloing,
And Ogier of the Stone and Sling
Drove at him with a spear.

But the Danes were wild with laughter,
And the great spear swung wide,
The point stuck to a straggling tree,
And either host cried suddenly,
As Alfred leapt aside.

Short time had shaggy Ogier
To pull his lance in line—
He knew King Alfred's axe on high,
He heard it rushing through the sky,
He cowered beneath it with a cry—
It split him to the spine:
And Alfred sprang over him dead,
And blew the battle sign.

Then bursting all and blasting
Came Christendom like death,
Kicked of such catapults of will,
The staves shiver, the barrels spill,
The wagons waver and crash and kill
The wagoners beneath.

Barriers go backwards, banners rend,
Great shields groan like a gong—
Horses like hours of nightmare
Neigh horribly and long.

Horses ramp high and rock and boil
And break their golden reins,
And slide on carnage clamorously,
Down where the bitter blood doth lie,
Where Ogier went on foot to die,
In the old ways of the Danes.

For back indeed disorderly
The Danes went clamouring,
Too worn to take anew the tale,
Or dazed with insolence and ale,

Or stunned of heaven, or stricken pale
Before the face of the King.

For dire was Alfred in his hour
The pale scribe witnesseth,
More mighty in defeat was he
Than all men else in victory,
And behind, his men came murderously,
Dry-throated, drinking death.

And Edgar of the Golden Ship
He slew with his own hand,
Took Ludwig from his lady's bower,
And smote down Harmar in his hour,
And vain and lonely stood the tower—
The tower in Guelderland.

And Torr out of his tiny boat,
Whose eyes beheld the Nile,
Wulf with his war-cry on his lips,
And Hacro born in the eclipse,
Who blocked the Seine with battleships
Round Paris on the Isle.

And Hacon of the Harvest-Song,
And Dirck from the Elbe he slew,
And Cnut that melted Durham bell,
And Fulk and fiery Oscar fell,
And Goderic and Sigael,
And Uriel of the Yew.

And highest sang the slaughter,
And fastest fell the slain,
When from the wood-road's blackening throat
A crowning and crashing wonder smote
The rear-guard of the Dane.
For the dregs of Colan's company—
Lost down the other road—

Had gathered and grown and heard the din,
And with wild yells came pouring in,
Naked as their old British kin,
And bright with blood for woad.

And bare and bloody and aloft
They bore before their band
The body of their mighty lord,
Colan of Caerleon and its horde,
That bore King Alfred's battle-sword
Broken in his left hand.

And a strange music went with him,
Loud and yet strangely far;
The wild pipes of the western land,
Too keen for the ear to understand,
Sang high and deathly on each hand
When the dead man went to war.

Blocked between ghost and buccaneer,
Brave men have dropped and died;
And the wild sea-lords well might quail
As the ghastly war-pipes of the Gael
Called to the horns of White Horse Vale,
And all the horns replied.

And Hildred the poor hedger
Cut down four captains dead,
And Halmar laid three others low,
And the great carls wavered to and fro
For the living and the dead.

And Gorlias grasped the great flag,
The Raven of Odin, torn;
And the eyes of Guthrum altered,
For the first time since morn.

King Guthrum was a great lord,
And higher than his gods—

He put the popes to laughter,
He chid the saints with rods,

He took this hollow world of ours
For a cup to hold his wine;
In the parting of the woodways
There came to him a sign.

In Wessex in the forest,
In the breaking of the spears,
We set a sign on Guthrum
To blaze a thousand years.

Where the high saddles jostle
And the horse-tails toss,
There rose to the birds flying
A roar of dead and dying;
In deafness and strong crying
We signed him with the cross.

Far out to the winding river
The blood ran down for days,
When we put the cross on Guthrum
In the parting of the ways.

G. K. CHESTERTON.

THE ISLAND HAWK

(A Song for the first Launching of His Majesty's Aerial Navy)

I

Chorus—
Ships have swept with my conquering name
Over the waves of war,
Swept thro' the Spaniards' thunder and flame
To the splendour of Trafalgar:
On the blistered decks of their great renown,
In the wind of my storm-beat wings,
Hawkins and Hawke went sailing down
To the harbour of deep-sea kings!

By the storm-beat wings of the hawk, the hawk,
Bent beak and pitiless breast,
They clove their way thro' the red sea-fray:
Who wakens me now to the quest?

II

Hushed are the whimpering winds on the hill,
Dumb is the shrinking plain,
And the songs that enchanted the woods are still
As I shoot to the skies again!
Does the blood grow black on my fierce bent beak,
Does the down still cling to my claw?
Who brightened these eyes for the prey they seek?
Life, I follow thy law!

For I am the hawk, the hawk, the hawk!
Who knoweth my pitiless breast?
Who watcheth me sway in the wild wind's way?
Flee—flee—for I quest, I quest.

III

As I glide and glide with my peering head,
Or swerve at a puff of smoke,
Who watcheth my wings on the wind outspread,
Here—gone—with an instant stroke?
Who toucheth the glory of life I feel
As I buffet this great glad gale,
Spire and spire to the cloud-world, wheel,
Loosen my wings and sail?

For I am the hawk, the island hawk,
Who knoweth my pitiless breast?
Who watcheth me sway in the sun's bright way?
Flee—flee—for I quest, I quest.

IV

Had they given me 'Cloud-cuckoo-city' to guard
Between mankind and the sky,

Tho' the dew might shine on an April sward,
Iris had ne'er passed by!
Swift as her beautiful wings might be
From the rosy Olympian hill,
Had Epops entrusted the gates to me
Earth were his kingdom still.

For I am the hawk, the archer, the hawk!
Who knoweth my pitiless breast?
Who watcheth me sway in the wild wind's way?
Flee—flee—for I quest, I quest.

V

My mate in the nest on the high bright tree
Blazing with dawn and dew,
She knoweth the gleam of the world and the glee
As I drop like a bolt from the blue;
She knoweth the fire of the level flight
As I skim, close, close to the ground,
With the long grass lashing my breast and the bright
Dew-drops flashing around.

She watcheth the hawk, the hawk, the hawk
(O, the red-blotched eggs in the nest!)
Watcheth him sway in the sun's bright way;
Flee—flee—for I quest, I quest.

VI

She builded her nest on the high bright wold,
She was taught in a world afar,
The lore that is only an April old
Yet old as the evening star;
Life of a far-off ancient day
In an hour unhooded her eyes;
In the time of the budding of one green spray
She was wise as the stars are wise.

Brown flower of the tree of the hawk, the hawk,
On the old elm's burgeoning breast,
She watcheth me sway in the wild wind's way:
Flee—flee—for I quest, I quest.

VII

Spirit and sap of the sweet swift Spring,
Fire of our island soul,
Burn in her breast and pulse in her wing
While the endless ages roll;
Avatar—she—of the perilous pride
That plundered the golden West,
Her glance is a sword, but it sweeps too wide
For a rumour to trouble her rest.

She goeth her glorious way, the hawk,
She nurseth her brood alone:
She will not swoop for an owlet's whoop,
She hath calls and cries of her own.

VIII

There was never a dale in our isle so deep
That her wide wings were not free
To soar to the sovran heights and keep
Sight of the rolling sea:
Is it there, is it here in the rolling skies,
The realm of her future fame?
Look once, look once in her glittering eyes,
Ye shall find her the same, the same.

Up to the skies with the hawk, the hawk,
As it was in the days of old!
Ye shall sail once more, ye shall soar, ye shall soar
To the new-found realms of gold.

IX

She hath ridden on white Arabian steeds
Thro' the ringing English dells,

For the joy of a great queen, hunting in state,
To the music of golden bells;
A queen's fair fingers have drawn the hood
And tossed her aloft in the blue,
A white hand eager for needless blood;
I hunt for the needs of two.

Yet I am the hawk, the hawk, the hawk!
Who knoweth my pitiless breast?
Who watcheth me sway in the sun's bright way?
Flee—flee—for I quest, I quest.

X

Who fashioned her wide and splendid eyes
That have stared in the eyes of kings?
With a silken twist she was looped to their wrist:
She has clawed at their jewelled rings!
Who flung her first thro' the crimson dawn
To pluck him a prey from the skies,
When the love-light shone upon lake and lawn
In the valleys of Paradise?

Who fashioned the hawk, the hawk, the hawk,
Bent beak and pitiless breast?
Who watcheth him sway in the wild wind's way?
Flee—flee—for I quest, I quest.

XI

Is there ever a song in all the world
Shall say how the quest began
With the beak and wings that have made us kings
And cruel—almost—as man?
The wild wind whimpers across the heath
Where the sad little tufts of blue
And the red-stained grey little feathers of death
Flutter! *Who fashioned us? Who?*

Who fashioned the scimitar wings of the hawk,
Bent beak and arrowy breast?
Who watcheth him sway in the sun's bright way?
Flee—flee—for I quest, I quest.

XII

Linnet and wood-pecker, red-cap and jay,
Shriek that a doom shall fall
One day, one day, on my pitiless way
From the sky that is over us all;
But the great blue hawk of the heavens above
Fashioned the world for his prey,—
King and queen and hawk and dove,
We shall meet in his clutch that day;

Shall I not welcome him, I, the hawk?
Yea, cry, as they shrink from his claw,
Cry, as I die, to the unknown sky,
Life, I follow thy law!

XIII

Chorus—
Ships have swept with my conquering name . . .
Over the world and beyond,
Hark! Bellerophon, Marlborough, Thunderer,
Condor, respond!—
On the blistered decks of their dread renown,
In the rush of my storm-beat wings,
Hawkins and Hawke went sailing down
To the glory of deep-sea kings!
By the storm-beat wings of the hawk, the hawk,
Bent beak and pitiless breast,
They clove their way thro' the red sea-fray!
Who wakens me now to the quest?

ALFRED NOYES.

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